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IO LOST
EBANON?

GM's surrender to Toyota, by Robert B. Reich

A WOMAN VICE PRESIDENT? • ROBERT CRAFT: OTTO KLEMPERER • REAGAN AND ABORTION

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Read it and weep

How the modern world learned to love the novel

By ROBERT DARNTON

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CORRESPONDENCE

BANAL SOVIET TRUTH

To the editors:

In "The Truth is Sometimes Banal" (TNR, January 30), the editors state: "In fact there are many kinds of Marxists who would welcome the blandishments of American aid and live quite comfortably in friendship with America—who might turn out to be democrats too." In fact, this "fact" is out of date, is highly dangerous, and is in large part responsible for the dilemma we now face. Pro-Soviet revolutionaries are trying to plant this notion in American heads.

For many years I operated under a similar illusion. I thought that it was possible to organize a radical left here that had nothing to do with the Soviets and saw them for what they are. I was just wasting my time.

A little recognized but important fact of international politics is the newfound ascendancy of pro-Soviet elements within the radical left. During the late '60s and early '70s in the United States, the more radical elements looked to the Chinese, not the Soviets. This reflected a worldwide situation. After the death of Mao, the pro-Chinese left collapsed. Soon afterward the "Maoist" left collapsed. And virtually every other "revolutionary" grouping has come under Soviet influence, or at the very least allows enough illusions about the Soviets, coupled with suspicions of the United States, to be decisively pro-Soviet. Even the Trotskyites support Cuba and Vietnam. Even the anti-Soviet Iranian revolutionaries hold that the U.S. is the "main danger."

It's time to recognize the situation as hopeless. If you don't like the Soviets, stay out of the left. That's what I've had to do.

JONATHAN CARSON
Austin, Texas

LINE ITEM DEBACLE

To the editors:

I hope TRB was speaking tongue-in-cheek when he said the "line-item veto . . . isn't a bad idea" ("Amazing Grace," TNR, February 6). When this veto power was first proposed in Illinois about fifteen years ago, advocates assured us of the benefits of increased fiscal efficiency. The measure was passed. The legislative process now never stops. Even after the two houses of the state legislature and the governor have approved and signed an appropriation, the governor is subject to pressure right up to the moment the check is issued.

Like the President, the governor also has authority to impound funds. This combination of veto and impounding means that the power of the purse has effectively shifted to the executive. The legislature now only indicates the general direction an appropriation should take. Even if Reagan is bluffing, as TRB argues, I for one fervently hope that the Democrats do not call him.

RICHARD C. HOLBROOK
Chicago, Illinois

KING'S ASSOCIATES

To the editors:

Eric Breindel's explanation of "Dr. King's Communist Associates" (TNR, January 30) would have been more helpful if it had provided more historical perspective. It's hardly surprising that Dr. King's civil rights movement would include Communists, since the American Communist Party was conspicuously out front in the 1930s working for racial justice. Walter Reuther suffered from the "pinko" label for rubbing shoulders with leftists struggling for justice for laboring people. The reality is that any struggle for social justice in this country necessarily at least skirts the far-left camp. As Americans who joined the American Communist Party out of dedication to social justice discovered when World War II proved the party's first allegiance to Soviet Russia, the American Communist Party admittedly had its own motives for fighting in these causes.

DELORES KLEIN
Peoria, Illinois

LYNDON CALLING

To the editors:

Peter Spiro performed a worthy public service with his article "Paranoid Politics" (TNR, February 6) about Lyndon LaRouche. Oddly, the general press has largely ignored the activities of this small but highly disciplined and dangerous organization.

This silence is odd, especially since one of the LaRouche techniques is to have his operatives disguise themselves as reporters from mainstream publications in order to gather information and gain access where they might not otherwise have been accepted. Because these individuals act as propagandists, they are not qualified for accreditation as journalists.

One of LaRouche's followers was recently exposed in this charade by *U.S. News & World Report*. Last year, at the A.F.L.-C.I.O. convention, we barred another LaRouchite who pretended to represent *Business Week*.

The *A.F.L.-C.I.O. News*, in 1982, printed a series of articles about the LaRouche organization but none of the new breed of investigative reporters has seen fit to follow suit.

MURRAY SEEGER
A.F.L.-C.I.O.
Washington, D.C.

THE REAL THING

To the editors:

Robert Brustein's stilted review of Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* ("Hippolytus Can Feel," TNR, January 30) shows that it is he and not Stoppard who has fallen too much "under the influence of Noel Coward's witty sangfroid." One would never know from Brustein's dismissive carping that *The Real Thing* is, among other things, a genuinely responsive exploration of our passions. The subjects of self-discovery—our attachments to others, self-consciousness, and self-expression—are all treated with a subtlety that is deeply felt but never pious. Brustein seems to believe that the display of a certain kind of attunedness to language betokens merely instrumental interest in everything else. It is as if Brustein just cannot credit a contemporary with more than one kind of success per work, locating Stoppard's in the "not bad but haven't we seen this verbal swordplay before" variety. But the accomplishment here cannot be fobbed off so easily. *The Real Thing* is not just "smart" or "clever." It is an unusually intelligent, perceptive account of various mature passions in mature people. Brustein's feigning of a quizzical can't-see-what-all-the-fuss-is-about pose puts his responsiveness, not Stoppard's, in question.

STEVEN L. ROSS
New York, New York

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

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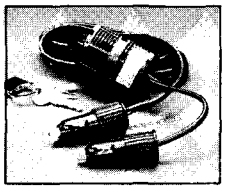
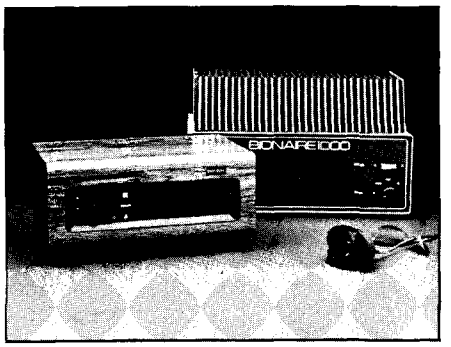


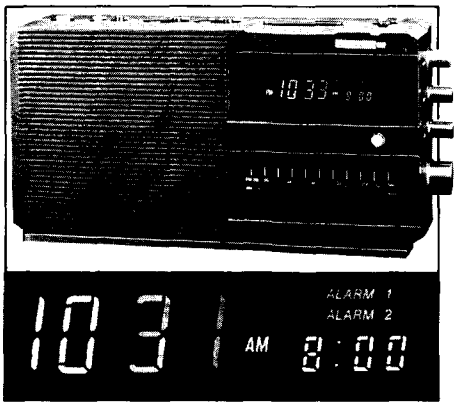
How would you like to recharge your car battery without ever opening the hood? Sound impossible? It's not, thanks to the Easy Charge. With traditional jumper cables you have to maneuver a second car fender-to-fender with the disabled car, open both hoods, and attach leads from battery to battery. The Easy Charge simplifies this process brilliantly by substituting connection from cigarette lighter to cigarette lighter. Just plug one end into the lighter of a running car, pass the 16' cord through both car windows and insert the other end in the lighter of the disabled car. After a few minutes' wait the battery is recharged sufficiently to restart the car. The Easy Charge costs **$20.00** ($2.95) #A629. Two for **$37.00** ($3.95) #A6292.

FRESH AIR MACHINES



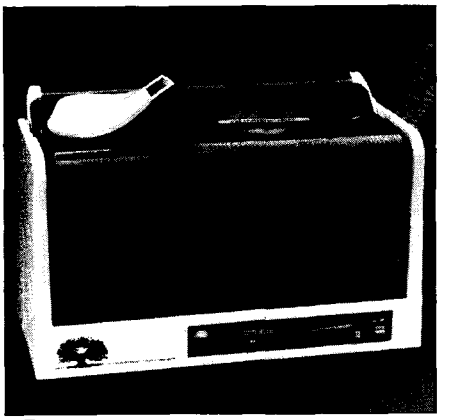
Air pollution doesn't politely stop at the front door. The Bionaire 500 is like moving a mountain breeze indoors. It removes 99% of all particulate pollutants from the air — goodbye to soot, dust, animal dander, pollen, cigarette smoke, smog, molds and fungi. Allergy sufferers breathe easier, everybody breathes more healthfully. The newly developed electret filter removes particles as small as 1/10,000 the thickness of a human hair. The Bionaire 500 cleans 45 cubic feet of air a minute, the average room three times an hour. It includes a switchable ion generator — negative ions are well-known for their presumed psychological good effects. A switchable fragrance dispenser allows you to add a fresh scent to the air when you wish. The Bionaire 500 measures 11" x 7" x 5", uses only 45 watts energy, comes in a hard plastic case with woodgrain finish and costs **$125.00** ($9.95) #A822. A larger model 1000 has three speeds instead of two and cleans 118 CFM of air. This unit measures 14" x 8" x 8½" with a lifetime steel housing. The Bionaire 1000 costs **$275.00** ($12.95) #A823. All models are UL-Listed and carry 1-year limited warranties.

MORNING SUNSHINE



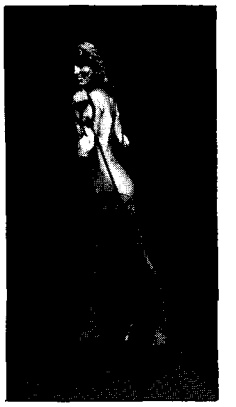
Looking for a civilized way to wake up? The Proton 320 turns up the volume on the day gradually, so you skip the usual shock of radio alarm squawk. Does your bedmate get up at a different time? Forget fumbling around resetting — the Proton has independent dual alarms, each with choice of radio or electronic signal. But the real bonus comes once you are awake. The Proton radio is a high-performance AM/FM-receiver with fidelity exceeding many livingroom sets. Its sound is exceptionally crisp, clean and full. There is separate bass/treble control, automatic loudness compensation, 5" speaker, abundant power. Sophistication shows in other ways too. The time-set controls run forward *and* backward for faster easier setting. The LCD display dims itself in the dark, brightens in the light. Snooze bar offers 7-minute reprieve. Ramp-up volume eases up to level over 10 seconds. Sleep control lets you retire to music without rousing yourself to turn off the radio. Backup battery preserves time and alarm even with a power failure. There is also a date indicator should you wake up feeling like Rip Van Winkle. All this comes in a handsomely styled flat black compact case (3¼" x 5½" x 10½") for just **$119.00** ($6.95) #A989. No surprise that Proton gets rave reviews in the electronic and business press. It makes it hard *not* to wake up smiling.

ULTRA-HUMIDIFIER

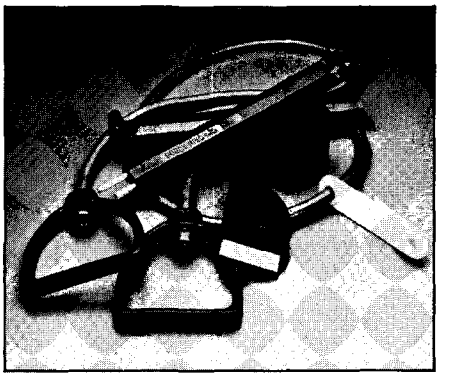


Here is a new approach to humidifying that is so revolutionary and inventive that it makes all other home humidifiers obsolete. It's the ultra-sonic humidifier. We discovered it last fall in Japan and during home use last winter found its performance to be truly outstanding. It uses extremely high frequency sound waves to break up water into a fine mist that carries and diffuses exceptionally well. One tabletop unit can humidify an entire 1500 sq. ft. apartment or house. It is also ultra-safe — the vapor stream is cold (even though it looks like hot steam) so it is impossible to get a burn. It is ultra-quiet — virtually noiseless, unlike conventional humidifiers. It is ultra-portable — measures only 14" x 6" x 9", weighs under 12 lbs. and has a convenient carry handle. The removable reservoir holds one gallon of water, refillable at any sink and runs for 10-12 hours on a filling. This humidifier by Bionaire has a humidstat control (low, medium or high) and shuts off automatically when it reaches the desired humidity level. Emitting nozzle swivels 360° and the unit shuts off automatically when empty or tipped over. **$149.00** ($10.95) #A888.

PUMPING RUBBER



The Lifeline Gym may well revolutionize the exercise business. It allows you to simulate just about any of the exercises done on the expensive machines found in health spas and gymnasiums. The reason is rubber — a stretchable rubber cable of the type used to stop planes landing on aircraft carriers. With this rubber cable, resistance increases with movement. This compensates for normal inertia and leverage gains, so your muscles are challenged through their full range of movement. The principal is known as *variable resistance* and it is at the heart of those fancy exercise machines. But the rubber is more effective yet. Because you have to resist its tendency to snap back on the return move, you gain a double benefit from your effort. You overcome positive *and* negative resistance in the course of each exercise. The Lifeline Gym is adjustable for individual strength levels and for different body-shaping intentions. It comes with its own carrying case and illustrated instruction/exercise book for **$36.00** ($3.95) #A748.



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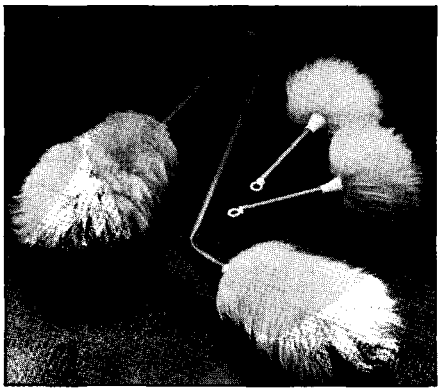
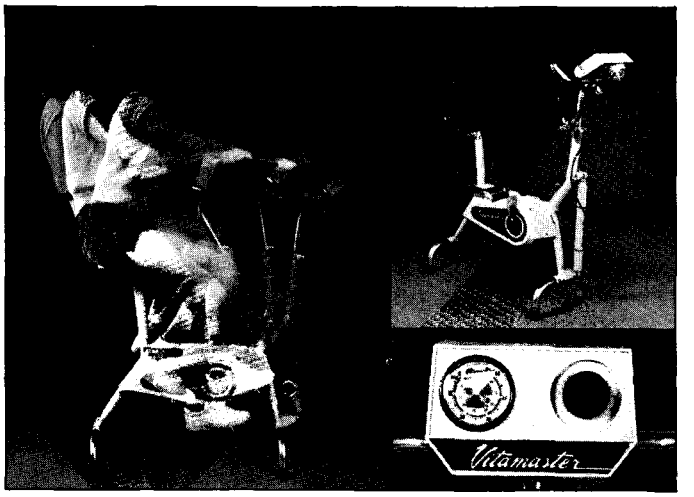


If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on lambswool dusters. On its own lambswool actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the wool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making these dusters just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, china, crystal, pictures and other fragile items. The standard 27″ long duster costs **$7.00** ($1.95) #A780; the bent-handled model is **$8.00** ($1.95) #A781; two mini-dusters cost **$8.00** ($1.95) #A794. The entire group, a total of four dusters, is an exclusive *Tools for Living* offering and costs just **$16.00** ($2.95) #A783. Buying the group saves you $9.90, it's almost like getting one duster free!

WATERING WHIZ

Now you can water all your plants in a single trip with this handy indoor garden hose. This 50′ vinyl hose comes with a set of four adaptors that readily attach to most indoor and outdoor faucets. From there you just take the water where you want it — an easy-control handle allows you to turn a splashless stream of water on and off as needed. There's a snap-in misting attachment, so after you water the roots you can spray the foliage. The kit costs **$11.00** ($1.95) #A681. Two for **$19.00** ($2.95) #A6812.

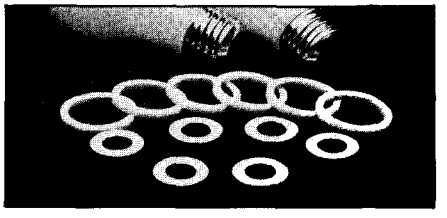
DUAL ACTION EXERCISER



This home fitness machine combines cycling and rowing action to give you a rigorous full-body workout. The dual action of this exerciser works the legs, arms, back, shoulders and chest — the continuous motion provides excellent cardiovascular benefits. Cycling and rowing can be done simultaneously or separately. Lock the handlebars and it's a stationary bike with smooth flywheel action. Tension is adjustable with a conveniently located control knob. Unlock the handlebars for rowing or dual action. Hydraulic piston is adjustable for variable rowing tension. This is a solid piece of equipment made by Vitamaster, the world's largest manufacturer of exercise bicycles. The seat is generously padded, fully adjustable for people of different heights. Frame is heavy-duty 1½″ welded 14-gauge tubular steel. Combination speedometer/odometer and 30 minute bell ringing timer lets you monitor your exercise. The Dual Action Exerciser comes in desert beige, weighs 51 lbs. and costs **$239.00** ($17.95) #A994.

UL LIGHT BUTTON

They are familiar household conveniences now, the little half-wave rectifier buttons that attach to the bottom of light bulbs and extend their life 50 to 100 times, sparing you the trouble of bulb-changing for years at a stretch while you save a bundle in bulb-replacement costs. But the Zana Power Disc is the first light button available that is UL-listed, meaning it has survived nearly two years of strenuous independent laboratory testing and been certified safe for home and commercial use. It provides security along with savings, safe enough even for high-temperature recessed fixtures. We are offering 6 for **$16.00** ($2.95) #A964. The manufacturer provides a 5-year warranty.



7-FINGERED BLIND CLEANER

Now a California designer has finally solved the problem of how to clean venetian blinds. This tool has 7 roller fingers, 4″ long and covered with a synthetic lambswool that picks up and holds dust and dirt. Pull the trigger and the fingers spread enough to slip over the blind slats (6 mini-blind slats or 3 conventional slats). Release the trigger and the slats are held firmly between the cleaning rollers. Then move the cleaner back and forth along the blind, release and grip the next set of slats. When soiled, the rollers can be removed and washed. **$9.00** ($1.95) #A787. Two for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A7872.

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FROM WASHINGTON

GREED AND ENVY

There will be those trying to appeal to greed and envy—and make no mistake, that is what they are trying to do—who suggest that our tax program favors the rich. This is the same antibusiness, antisuccess attitude that brought this country to the brink of economic disaster.

— President Reagan, January 31

All right, let's talk about greed and envy. Success, too. These are all crucial concepts in the Reagan worldview, reflected in the policies of his Administration.

I was surprised to hear Reagan come out against greed. Could this be the handiwork of that nefarious coven of pragmatists we keep reading about—the one the far right claims has taken over the White House? Or is it one of Reagan's famous "gaffes"? No, no, Mr. President, you're *for* greed. Adam Smith demonstrated in *The Wealth of Nations* how the "invisible hand" directs individual greed in ways that produce general prosperity. You're supposed to accuse the Democrats of not understanding this, of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Remember?

The claim for supply-side economics is that it can cure a sick economy through the healing power of greed. Indeed, greed is even more central to supply-side economics than to traditional free-market theory. Supply-siders claim to be able to play greed like a fiddle, to ride it like a bronco, to manipulate greed with scientific precision through changes in tax rates. Lower a man's taxes, unleash his greed, and stand back.

The plain fact is that Reagan's tax program *does* favor the rich. The biggest and quickest tax breaks, by far, went to top-bracket investment income, and to inherited wealth. Counting Social Security, most wage earners actually have had a tax *increase* since Reagan took office. True supply-siders make no apology for this. Rewarding successfully applied greed is the whole idea.

Now, envy is more complicated. This subject brings out the conflict within modern conservatism. Old-fashioned Tory-style conservatism prizes stability and social order. Because social order requires hierarchy, disparities of fortune are healthy. Anyway, they are inevitable. The good society is one in which everyone knows, and is contented with, his or her place. From this perspective, encouraging people to compare their stations in life with those above them is corrupt and dangerous demagoguery. It creates insatiable appetites and rends the social fabric. That's "envy," and that's bad.

But Ronald Reagan and the people around him usually claim to be a different and more palatable kind of conservative—the kind sometimes self-styled a "classical liberal." This sort of conservative favors maximum individual freedom and an unfettered capitalist economic system where, as Reagan told the unemployed in his recent State of the Union speech, "each of you can reach as high as your God-given talents will take you." In this worldview, invidious comparisons are not corrosive; they're healthy. People are *supposed* to be constantly reminding themselves of the heights they've not scaled. And Reagan himself is fond of reminding them by offering success stories in his speeches for audiences to salivate over. Only now it's not "envy": it's "incentive."

What both strains of conservatism agree on is that those who are at the top of our society deserve to be there. And, by implication, those who aren't don't. When Reagan accuses the Democrats of an "antisuccess attitude," he apparently detects some skepticism on this score. I wish I detected more of it. There's nothing wrong with success. In a properly functioning capitalist system, successful people really do enrich society as a whole more than they enrich themselves. This kind of success is important to America's prosperity and strength. It should be prized and nurtured. But the smug Republican assumption that success in our economy is the result of applied moral worth, and that it's therefore immoral and ultimately self-defeat-

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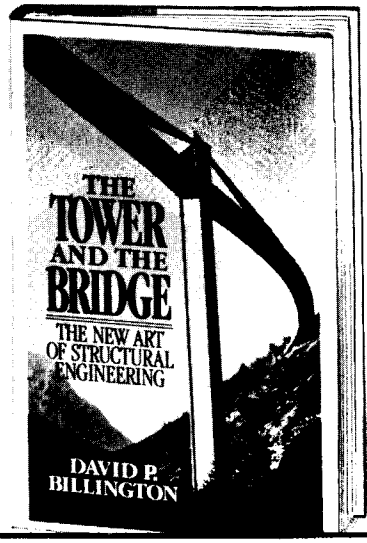

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
FEBRUARY 27, 1984

WHO LOST LEBANON?

President Reagan tried to put a brave face on it, saying he was ordering "decisive new steps" in Lebanon and authorizing stepped-up naval and air bombardments of Syrian and Syrian-backed positions. But let us face the fact: the United States is pulling out of Lebanon and leaving it in a state of bloody chaos. Just how bloody and chaotic Lebanon will yet be it is hard for the mind to imagine. American policy has failed, and the failure is reminiscent of other American humiliations. Richard Nixon "shot his way out the door" in Vietnam with four years of bombing raids and "Vietnamization," but he was only disguising the pullout. South Vietnam ultimately collapsed, with the last refugees clinging to helicopters taking off from the U.S. Embassy roof. "Nonessential" American personnel were helicoptered out of the U.S. Embassy compound in Beirut last Tuesday. We are not gone completely yet, but this "redeployment" of American Marines is just a euphemism for "withdrawal."

In another parallel to Vietnam, the body was not even cold—indeed, the body was not even dead—before Mr. Reagan and the Democrats in Congress began pointing fingers of blame at one another over Lebanon. The President's decision to evacuate the Marines was preceded by weeks of Congressional demands for just that. In the course of demanding "prompt withdrawal" of the U.S. contingent, the House Democrats prepared, debated, and then thought better of a harshly partisan resolution accusing the Administration of putting U.S. servicemen in jeopardy without reason. White House spokesman Larry Speakes—echoing Ron Ziegler in the Vietnam days—accused the Democrats of aiding and abetting an enemy takeover, and the President himself—echoing Mr. Nixon—said that Speaker O'Neill "may be ready to surrender, but I'm not." Not for a couple of days, anyway.

This partisan squabbling took place as the Lebanese government of Amin Gemayel was undergoing its most profound crisis yet—the resignation of the cabinet, the mass defection of Moslems from the Lebanese Army, and the takeover of West Beirut by Shiite thugs. Shiite leader Nabih Berri, one of Syrian President Hafez Assad's most dependable Lebanese clients, declared triumphantly: "The battle is about to end; Lebanon's little shah is on the verge of collapse." Another chilling parallel. Like the Shah of Iran, another pro-Western leader who had placed his trust in the United States was about to bite the dust. America was having another "incomplete success."

The argument will be made, of course, that the United States had no business in Vietnam, no business supporting the Shah, and no business sending the Marines into Lebanon. But the fact is that we did all those things believing them to be in our national interest, and we failed. We can take some small comfort in the idea that we are not alone responsible for our failure. President Thieu was corrupt and the Shah was brutal. But Amin Gemayel was initially touted as a conciliator, and he did try to reach an accommodation with the Moslem factions in his country. He was even said to have good relations with Mr. Assad. Every compromise he offered, however, was unacceptable to Syria and to the factions, who always wanted more. What Syria wanted was abrogation of Mr. Gemayel's agreement to live in peace with Israel. The factions had flexible demands. The less American resolve there was behind Mr. Gemayel, the greater were their demands. And so, in the Western press, Mr. Gemayel stopped being represented as a conciliator and began to be described as a "Phalangist" and an intransigent. But if he falls, what

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follows may be far worse—something else he has in common with his Vietnamese and Iranian counterparts.

Both the Reagan Administration and Congressional Democrats bear responsibility for the American contribution to the debacle unfolding in Lebanon. The people of Lebanon, put under Mr. Assad's boot, will suffer the most. But no one should forget that, as with Vietnam and Iran, the United States will also suffer long-term consequences, in terms of shaken confidence among allies and encouragement to U.S. adversaries. How reliable will we now seem to those "moderate" Arab states we're always being told about?

Mr. Reagan's error was in trying to finesse the spinelessness of the American people and their representatives in Congress. He understood that post-Vietnam America would not stand for full-scale use of American power to drive Syrian forces out of Lebanon and guarantee the survival of a pro-Western government. So he resorted to a token measure, the assignment of twelve hundred Marines to be a "presence," a symbol of American dedication.

Perhaps there were a few Congressional Democrats who, in saying that the President sent in too few Marines to fight and too many to die, meant he should have sent in more. The majority obviously believed that *any* Marines were too many and that the Lebanese crisis somehow should have been handled by diplomatic means. That crisis, however, has not been based on diplomatic disagreements. It was caused by the determination of Syria's military dictator to make Lebanon part of his suzerainty, using his own forty thousand-man occupying army when necessary and heavily armed Lebanese militias when possible. The crisis required diplomacy, but it also required force, and the Democrats are so chary of force that they can scarcely contemplate its use except in response to an attack across the central plain of Europe—where, fortunately, they have not been tested.

The Democrats made a deal with Mr. Reagan. They said they would let him play his weak hand in Lebanon for eighteen months, past the 1984 election. The President played the hand poorly—he could scarcely do otherwise, having ruled out "combat responsibilities" from the outset—and he was undermined from within his own Administration by a Pentagon that is almost as allergic to force as is the Democratic Party, and just as willing to tell the press about it. The Administration and the Pentagon both are responsible for the security failure, in both its technical and wider dimensions, that led to the deaths of 239 Marines in the truck bombing of October 26.

But there is no denying that the Democrats reneged on their deal. They set up a drumbeat of criticism that encouraged Syria to press its advantage at every turn, and the factions to press for the collapse of the Beirut government altogether. Just when U.S. negotiator Donald Rumsfeld had patched together a tentative disengagement agreement among Lebanese forces last month, the Pentagon's report on the October bombing came out, the calls for U.S. withdrawal mounted, and the disengagement agreement fell apart. The harping for a pullout by Speaker O'Neill, culminating in the drafting of last week's resolution, may not have aided and abetted Hafez Assad, but it did nothing to discourage him. In the end, the Democrats were not even willing to pass the measure, for fear of being held responsible for what they'd written. In the end, alas, the President did as they demanded.

THE GENDER TRAP

In this golden age of the gender gap, women are being shamelessly wooed. The Vice Presidency—which has been variously likened to a pitcher of warm spit, a spare tire on the automobile of government, a cataleptic state, and a kind of disgrace—is one prize the Democrats have been dangling with much fanfare. And with much encouragement from women themselves. "Don't call me baby, call me Vice President!" chanted hundreds of conventioneers at the annual convention of the National Organization for Women in October. Their leader, Judy Goldsmith, was just as insistent: "1984 may not be the year for America's first woman President," she proclaimed. "But there is no reason why we should not reasonably look for a woman Vice Presidential candidate in 1984." In fact, however, there are plenty of good reasons why the Democratic nominee probably won't pick a woman Vice Presidential candidate come July. All the noise over the notion of a Second Lady, from the candidates and women alike, involves more symbolism (and cynicism) than substance.

What stands out most in the candidates' courtship is its coyness. Only Jesse Jackson has actually plighted his troth. The rest decline to make a firm commitment to run with a woman, although they rush to endorse the idea. Gary Hart declared his undying devotion to womankind in the first moments of the New Hampshire debate: "The fact of the matter," he intoned, "is that women bring to public policy decisions a measure of thoughtfulness and, if I may say so, humanity and morality that too many men in our society don't seem to have possessed or demonstrated." Ernest Hollings has a dizzying list of hypothetical companions for the ticket: Gloria Steinem, Katharine Graham, Barbara Jordan, Representative Lindy Boggs, and Lieutenant Governor Martha Griffiths of Michigan. By letting even implausible names drop and abstract testimonials soar, the candidates skirt the awkward question of actual fitness for the office.

Despite the dubious reputation the Vice Presidency has earned, the qualifications for occupying the office are still high and well established: they are, or at least ought to be, the same as the qualifications for the Presidency. Women have made striking gains in politics recently; the number of women in elective office nearly tripled between 1975 and 1981. Yet the Democrats have no woman Senators, and the sole Democratic woman governor, Martha Layne

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Collins of Kentucky, was elected only last November. The party does have a number of accomplished and respected women in its delegation to the House of Representatives—people like Geraldine Ferraro and Patricia Schroeder. And there is surely nothing wrong with adding sex to the list of irrelevant considerations (region, religion, etc.) which always weigh in the choice. A ticket-balancing formula like "We need a moderate urban Catholic governor from the West" is hardly made worse by the addition of "female." It should help, not hurt, a prospective Vice Presidential candidate to be of the opposite sex from the Presidential nominee. But this year the Democrats would be reaching. If a woman is nominated this time, her sex will have counted too heavily.

Fortunately, the field of plausible prospects is almost certain to keep on widening quickly in the years ahead. Indeed, the Republicans already have several women with at least the right paper credentials—Paula Hawkins and Nancy Kassebaum in the Senate; Margaret Heckler, Elizabeth Dole, and (a nominal Democrat) Jeane Kirkpatrick in the cabinet. The steady progress of women toward positions of leadership is hardly likely to be helped, and could even be hindered, by the selection of a less than clearly qualified woman Vice President now.

Nor is the move terribly likely to improve the Democratic Party's prospects, which is of course the main motive behind all the talk. The Democrats don't have to make puffy promises to get the women's vote. Women have already demonstrated their party preference and their unhappiness with Mr. Reagan. If there were any firm evidence that a woman on the ticket would lure a lot of women to the polls who would otherwise stay home—and there isn't—the Democrats would no doubt sound more committed to a sexually balanced ticket right now. As it is, however, when the Democratic nominee sizes up his position in July, the practical arguments for balancing the ticket in more familiar ways are likely to prevail over the symbolic case for bestowing the Vice Presidency on a woman.

But there are more important reasons for the Democrats to drop the femagoguery. What's at issue is their vision of women's increasingly active role in politics. If there's anything the gender gap should have made clear, but in fact seems to have obscured, it's that women don't need more token gestures. What unites them as a political constituency is not a feminine weakness for flattery, as the candidates seem to think. The common perspective women bring to politics is the product of their relative social and economic vulnerability. That's not a narrow perspective, but part of the broader concerns that have long been at the core of the Democratic Party's mission. If the Democrats are serious about championing those concerns, they shouldn't start off with half-offers of the honorary second spot. To adopt token tactics is only to open themselves to more charges of playing symbolic special interest politics. That is not what the party needs.

And it's not what women need either as they pursue their bid for national political prominence. If women's claims to a place on the ticket are to be credible and constructive, they should start by running for President, not by angling for an unlikely offer of the Vice Presidency. However grueling and often fatuous the long campaign can be, it may be the best way for a woman candidate to establish her qualifications for national leadership. Judy Goldsmith is wrong that 1984 is the year for a woman Vice President. But consider the difference that a serious woman candidate for President would make in 1988 or 1992. Then, instead of making disingenuous offers, men candidates would face actual challenges. Instead of waiting and chanting, women would be gaining exposure and building support. Above all, a bid for the Presidency would prove that women's participation in politics cannot be summed up by the confining rhetoric of a special gender cause.

Unsocial Issues

It is dismaying but not surprising that President Reagan should have kicked off his reelection campaign with a Bible-thumping anti-abortion speech to a convention of religious broadcasters. It is not surprising because each party starts the campaign by shoring up its constituency, which means starting out at the extreme and working its way toward the center. Mr. Reagan first must succor his fundamentalists while the Democrats play to theirs. By late summer they should each start talking sense.

In the meantime it is all dismaying because it brings out the worst in American politics. At a time when we have the largest budget deficit in our history, and American boys are ducking bullets in a couple of shooting wars, the President launches his campaign by proclaiming his brotherhood with a gaggle of electronic Elmer Gantrys. "Under this roof, some four thousand of us are kindred spirits united in one burning belief: God is our father; we are his children; together, brothers and sisters, we are one." And so on. The President then flashes his family membership card. The man who has made a career out of talking about getting government off the backs of the people starts his campaign by pledging to expand government authority over the private lives of women and the spiritual lives of children.

Now, we don't regard school prayer as a particularly monstrous yoking of church to state. After all, prayers are read daily before sessions of Congress; and during the two hundred years when school prayer was permitted, the Republic managed to keep the wall between church and state in reasonably good repair. We do oppose mandated school prayer because it is a form of unnecessary coercion and regimentation.

Who is to put God back in the schools, as the President likes to put it, if not the government? Mr. Reagan casts school prayer as a test of individual liberty. Oh, for heaven's sake—children (and adults, for that matter) are free to pray to God every minute of the day. What Mr. Reagan

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wants, in the name of what he euphemistically calls voluntary school prayer, is for the state to designate some portion of every school child's day for religious activity. And not just a moment of silence, either. "We already have the right to remain silent," he joshed. "We can take the Fifth Amendment." (But not the first.) If Mr. Reagan's moment of classroom prayer is not to be silent, what does he propose to fill it with? A state-composed or state-approved prayer, to be read aloud by the teacher or in chorus by the class? It's worth remembering that nonbelievers have their rights, too.

It wouldn't be the end of the world if the school prayer buffs got their way, but it's certain that restoring school prayer would be no victory for individual freedom. What's worse is to pretend that it is a solution for the various vexations of our educational system. "If we could get God and discipline back into our schools," says the President, "maybe we could get drugs and violence out." This is simply another example of Mr. Reagan's genial demagoguery. It is also the kind of magical thinking that for a long time has given religion a bad name.

The President is less genially demagogic on abortion. If we are to believe what he told the broadcasters, this country cannot survive half alive and half aborted. (Mr. Reagan, on this issue, likes to portray himself as an abolitionist.) But are we to believe him? Mr. Reagan, after all, has been in office for three years and has made almost no exertion on behalf of the social agenda he now so strenuously proclaims. As President he has been more realistic (mellower, perhaps) than he pretends to be as candidate. It is not that the President disbelieves the homilies he delivers, but that in office he has shown that he tacitly understands how little place they have in the *political* life of this country. After all, more than a tenth of the country's abortions that he denounces as the ultimate stain on American life are performed in California under legislation that he signed into law as governor in 1967. We do not necessarily prefer a pragmatic reactionary to an ideological one. What we do find distasteful, however, is a political actor who tries to have it both ways. The sin is not fanaticism, but cynicism.

As a general rule, "social" issues, abortion in particular, are best left to the conscience of individual citizens. Individuals, of course, operate in a moral climate, and one doesn't want a climate that encourages the view that an abortion is no different from an appendectomy, or that moral choices are life-style decisions, like choosing a stereo. The point is not that the decision to end a pregnancy is without moral weight. It is that government, which especially in its elected branches is prone to reflect the momentary prejudices and passions of the citizenry, brings no special wisdom or purer vision to the question. The last time it ventured into the arena of public morality it gave us prohibition.

What we object to most is that these issues should become political footballs in the first place. Invariably this produces cynicism on all sides. REAGAN TELLS BROADCASTERS, FETUSES SUFFER PAIN, reads the headline in *The New York Times*. The President, who is no doctor, seeks to support that claim by saying that "medical science doctors confirm that when the lives of the unborns are snuffed out, they often feel pain—pain that is long and agonizing." When asked where that assertion came from, the White House answered that it was based on an article in *Human Life Review*, written by a law professor. So much for medical science doctors. Within hours the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists had responded. "We are unaware of any evidence of any kind that would substantiate a claim that pain is perceived by a fetus," said a spokesman. He conceded that the fetus will sometimes respond reflexively to medical probes, but "we have no evidence whatsoever that this is in any way interpreted by the fetus as pain." Of course not! What possible evidence could a noncommunicative organism give? Avoidance behavior? The fatuousness is catching. Everyone claims to know the scientific answer to a question that by its nature does not admit to such an answer. All we can say is: perhaps. And then proceed with trepidation and humility.

No use wringing our hands, however. There will be no trepidation and humility in discussing God or fetal pain or any of the other unknowables of life, now that the Presidential campaign has begun. It makes us wish for an early November.

NOTEBOOK

□ IT'S AMAZING WHAT IS thought to be a First Amendment issue these days. St. Bartholomew's in New York, the richest Episcopal church anywhere, wants to build a commercially lucrative high rise behind, and in the airspace above, this house of God, fashionably situated on Park Avenue, one block north of the Waldorf-Astoria. The problem is that St. Bart's is a certified landmark, and there are some things you can't do to or with certified landmarks. And the building that the ambitious rector and a shade more than half the congregation want to erect in the area between the church and the heavens falls afoul of the landmark restrictions. The bishop of New York, Paul Moore, sees this as a civil liberties issue. Because the law prevents the church from making a killing in real estate speculation, the bishop believes, it prevents the church from carrying out its mission, which—despite the address, is, he says, a mission to the poor. (Never have so many Park Avenue gentlemen worried about the poor.) This is where the First Amendment comes in, according to the bishop. On the contrary: if the law were to bend for the church, *that* would be a violation of the First Amendment. What St. Bart's is invoking is not the American Constitution, but a medieval doctrine which puts the church's temporal activities outside the jurisdiction of the secular sovereign. That's a matter that was never even fought over in America; it was settled centuries ago in Europe.

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□ FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "*Portnoy's Complaint* is a sort of *Moby Dick* of masturbation; in the second part, Portnoy masturbates with girls, a change only in the *dramatis personae*. The book is a kind of *Catch-22* of sexuality, and much funnier. Though the satire in *Portnoy's Complaint* is generally first-rate, the book hardly ever rises to irony. Irony requires dimension, the possibility of grandeur, and what we have here is a series of caricatures. Father, mother, sister, mistresses—even Portnoy himself—each has one act, one *shtik*. Mother is a statue of illiberty; father a constipated *nebbish*; sister a fat, graceless non-*shikse*; each of the mistresses merely one of the main currents in American thought. And Portnoy is not so much a human being as a monomaniacal hangup. In spite of these reservations, *Portnoy* is sure to be regarded as a kind of literary Second Coming. Halfway between Oy! and Wow! it proves that the Jew is just as good a jerk, just as magnificently and mysteriously irrational, as any *goy*. In fact, it may well earn immortality on even another ground: that it is the first novel to be written by a Jew who was voted one of the hundred best-dressed men in the world." ("A Sort of Moby Dick," by Anatole Broyard, March 1, 1969.)

What Jesse can teach the Democrats.

JACKSON'S MOMENT

THE REVEREND Jesse Jackson is not the easiest man to admire, but admiration is not necessary in order to welcome a political campaign. Political movements do not always present us with ideal leaders. It would be purblind to argue that the Gracchus brothers, hardly the most admirable of men, did not give the populace of Rome a voice it needed. It ought to be enough that Jackson is forcing an urgent issue in a manner he won't let us ignore. Jackson has legitimacy. In seeking the leadership of a popular movement, he is claiming no more than a traditional role; and the more he disturbs us the more he seems necessary.

No politician makes his own time. At the most, he seizes a time that has come. It may not say much that in some of the latest polls Jackson ranks second with Glenn among the Democratic candidates. Most of his support, it is said, comes from blacks; so where is his national constituency or appeal? (Most of Glenn's, of course, comes from whites.) We ought to at least acknowledge that if Jackson—starting from an initially narrow base in Chicago, hampered by personal characteristics that rub many blacks as well as whites raw, and lacking any experience in appointive or elective office—continues to make such a mark, he must be filling a void that others cannot fill. Even if he is making only a dent, the dent is impressive all the same. By Jackson's candidacy, the possibility of a black soon being on a Presidential ticket has been brought, more strikingly than before, out of the realm of speculation into that of serious consideration.

Jackson is mobilizing a constituency which neither other black leaders nor white Democratic candidates have thought or been able to mobilize on a national scale with such energy. If the immediate effect of his campaign is to persuade to register and to vote those who are so poor and so without hope that previously they have not thought it worthwhile, then he is doing something that even any reflective conservative must applaud. He will be helping to bring into the political mainstream a crucial number of American citizens who seemed to have permanently abandoned any hope or belief that they might one day find a place within it.

The pollsters and political commentators are saying that Reagan has politicized the American people. By appearing to stand for well-defined principles and even for an ideology, and by pursuing policies which directly affect (for better or for worse) the day-to-day lives of every class of people from the richest to the poorest, he has (it is said) made Americans realize again that their votes can make a difference in local and Congressional as well as Presidential elections. To that extent he is, as Walter Mondale rather limply protests, a genuinely radical politician. There is not much evidence that Mondale or any other Democratic candidate can politicize a doll in a cabbage patch. But Jesse Jackson is politicizing those whom not even Reagan could have politicized. That is why it is no exaggeration to call him an elemental force, not primarily for the effect he may have on this year's campaign, but for a new direction in which he is pointing the political future of America.

Jackson excites visceral hostility as well as visceral admiration, and for that reason alone he must be taken seriously. Politicians who make people hot under the collar are usually bringing some new force to bear. I would not like to seem to be engaged in, as it were, a whitewash of Jackson. There are several reasons why I would find it difficult to vote for him for President. But it is necessary to say that, even if one accepts the harshest picture which can be drawn of him, it would not in itself make his campaign unwelcome. It is a historical fact that many of the most important struggles to establish some vital principle have been led by and fought in defense of not the most savory or principled characters on the scene. Essential parliamentary and civil rights, including the freedom of the press and the right to be seated in Parliament if elected (the second of which bears comparison with the claims made by Jackson now), were won in Britain in defense of a quite disreputable figure, the notoriously dissolute and otherwise untrustworthy John Wilkes. If that stuffy New Whig, Edmund Burke, the leading neoconservative of his day, not to mention the respectable merchants of the City of London, could spring to the defense of Wilkes in his fight against the oppressions of George III, then there is as little reason for balking at the financial mismanagement,

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irresponsible political rhetoric and flamboyant political gestures, and more trifling peccadillos of Jesse Jackson. Important movements are seldom led by men with unstained hands and hearts.

Jackson is altogether a traditional American politician; and, to some, disturbingly so. Take one honest look at Jackson, at his manner, his methods, and his popular appeal, and the word that must spring first to one's mind is neither *black* nor *radical*, but *American*. Look at this politician, all-American in his looks, in his dress, in his tastes, in his ambitions, in his (free-)wheeling and dealing. You could not place him anywhere else. This is no Marcus Garvey, telling American blacks to return to their "roots" in Sierra Leone or Liberia.

All the symbols commonly associated with him, from what William Brashler described in these pages as his "first-class jet travel and Izod jogging togs" to his "well-publicized 'trade covenants' . . . with companies such as Burger King and Coca-Cola," are also the symbols of white "middle-American" culture and aspirations. He could take over the commercials for General Electric from Ronald Reagan. Maybe some day he will.

This is what is so unexpectedly persuasive in his appeal, of which I think no one has yet taken the measure. He is not asking the poor or any other minority to give up hope in America, to burn its ghettos or loot its stores, or even to demonstrate violently on its streets. He is inviting them to use the mainstream institutions of America to find and take their place in that mainstream. That is again why any reflective conservative must have a certain respect for the meaning of his campaign: he may be doing more than anyone else to prevent the growth in America of a "state within a state."

WHAT IS profoundly ominous about the growth of an "underclass" in America as the result of the policies of recent Administrations is that millions of people have so little hope or expectation of receiving either jobs or justice from the society at large that they are in effect creating their own societies with their own economies and even their own laws. Perhaps most alarming of all, the police in many communities have more or less given up trying to enforce the laws of the larger society, and these communities become virtually self-policing. There is no denying this, even in social mores. The single-parent, fatherless, large families; the appalling statistics of teenage pregnancies; and even the symptoms out of which Reagan tries to make such capital, the violence and general lack of discipline and instruction in inner-city schools—all of these point to the real danger in tolerating the growth of an underclass, the emergence of a state within a state.

To this—whatever his ambitions, whatever his motives, whatever is misguided in him—Jackson says, in a way we cannot ignore: "It must stop." Fundamentally he is trying to knit American society together again from circumstances that are far more chilling than those confronting Martin Luther King Jr. It has been disheartening to observe the apparent inability of the black movement to find a leader with the qualities of dynamic and potentially creative leadership. Jackson may have them. He may at least have them for this moment.

To look at his Americanness from another angle: during the television debate he often seemed the most conservative of the Democratic candidates, the one who might have as easily been a Republican. (If he adapted his rhetoric to the occasion, speaking in more measured terms than is usual, then he would not be the first politician who, on addressing a national constituency for his first time, finds a suitable level of voice.) He was the one who spoke of strengthening the family almost in the accents of Reagan. The preacher is there, in his views, sometimes, as in his oratory. The fiscal mismanagement of Operation PUSH ought not to blind us to the fact that he was the black leader who perhaps most dramatically tried to turn the black movement from looking only for government welfare. Jackson is one black leader who could easily and convincingly cross party lines. Like the black leaders who said during the 1920s that the black debt to the party of Lincoln had been paid in full, and that it was time to switch their votes to the Democrats, it would not be out of character if Jackson one day said that the black debt to the Democrats has been paid in full. He has himself supported Republicans, and some black Republicans support him.

JACKSON MAY yet become a "spoiler." Whether his campaign ends in bitterness or in harmony, however, he will be faulted for having launched it. A frequent criticism of his effort is that because Jackson is certain to lose, his campaign is bound to disillusion those it attracted to politics in the first place. But this is a criticism that could be made of any black candidacy. The truth is that Jackson's campaign is likely to be *less* disillusioning for black voters than a losing Presidential campaign (and it is hard to imagine any other kind) by a more conventional black politician. Suppose this year's black candidate had been a Senator or governor who had played by all the white man's rules—run for local, then statewide office; chewed away at the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners; made the conventional tour of the three-I league (Ireland, Italy, and Israel); taken unexceptionable mainstream positions on foreign and domestic affairs; and so on—and had *then* been rewarded by rejection. (In 1982 Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley lost his bid to become governor of California by 1 percent; 3 percent of voters polled said they voted against him because he was black.) That would truly leave a legacy of bitterness among blacks. But Jackson is not a politician in the strict sense; he is a movement man, not a party man. He has not played by the usual rules, so it is not so unfair for him to lose the game. His defeat will not be as easy to blame on racism as, for example, Bradley's was. Blacks (and whites) can afford to make their point by voting for Jackson, and not be so disillusioned at the end that they blame the system and drop out again.

In this way Jackson might well play a vital transitional role in accustoming both blacks and whites to a black being on the Presidential ticket without it being seen as a

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decisive test of the possibility of electing a black. Jackson talks a lot of breaking "the cycle of pain," a phrase which any other politician must envy, although he used it provocatively in Syria, where the success of his own limited mission broke no real "cycle of pain." (Jackson still lets himself be hostage to Third World rhetoric which he may not believe and does not need; and it was irresponsible and indecorous for him to bargain for funds from the Arab League.) But whatever one may think of the phrase, he may more certainly be breaking another cycle. Until he entered the race it was not clear that either party would be faced this year with the necessity to decide openly if it would take a black on its ticket. He has forced the Democrats to that choice when it was not clearly on the agenda. Whatever the choice this year, that can only be to the good, increasing the likelihood that soon a black candidate will be naturally considered from the first.

HENRY FAIRLIE

Mitterrand's economics is faltering.

SOCIALISTS VS. WORKERS

IT SEEMED a classically French story of labor conflict. Last December the Talbot automobile firm, part of the Peugeot empire and one of the most reactionary employers in France, announced that it was in deep financial trouble and was going to fire three thousand workers at its Poissy plant, outside Paris. The two unions at the plant went on strike, while Talbot's antiunion goons skulked in the background. Until the Socialists came to power in 1981, Talbot had been company union territory, with the attendant spying, intimidation, violence, and racism. The Talbot management undoubtedly hoped that the confrontation would provide an opportunity to bring back the company union.

But the Talbot saga told more about France's future labor concerns than about those of the past. It was one of the first signs of serious trouble for President Mitterrand's industrial policies. In 1981 Mitterrand believed that a Keynesian demand-led boomlet, helped along by an international recovery projected for 1982, would maintain employment in the short run. Basic reforms—nationalizations, increased spending on research and development, the application of France's large reserves of technocratic ingenuity to planning and industrial policy—would then be instituted, to be backed up by shrewd, state-underwritten investment decisions. These policies would facilitate modernization, and allow the French to "reconquer the domestic market" and some of the international one, too. Employment levels and an expanding welfare state would thus be assured for the long term. The Talbot conflict represented the end of many of these hopes.

To a large extent the Mitterrand government inherited Talbot's problems. They began back in 1978. Peugeot, seeing Chrysler's bankruptcy approaching, bought out most of Chrysler's European branches as a way of expanding its market share. The deal was a mistake. The oil shock of 1979 dealt the French auto industry a severe blow, and Peugeot mismanaged the acquisition by consolidating Chrysler's European distribution network and losing business to German carmakers in the process. In the early 1980s, when the European auto industry began to face really hard times, the main questions at Talbot were whether, and how, to restructure the company's finances and factories—and how many jobs would have to go as a result. In Mitterrand's France, however, companies do not simply draw up lists and fire at will. When Talbot informed the French government last spring that the company needed major restructuring, the government appointed a technocratic *sage* to check out the case. He concluded that ten thousand jobs were redundant. It was the Socialists, then, along with the reactionary Talbot managers, who insisted on the layoffs.

After meeting with leaders of the Confédération Générale du Travail, the pro-Communist union federation, government ministers agreed to reduce the number of firings to three thousand, and to take measures that would ease the blow to the laid-off workers: retraining programs, early retirements, and subsidies to help immigrants, who represent a large part of the work force, return home. In exchange, the C.G.T.—obliged to support the government so long as it contains Communist ministers—contracted to help in the delicate task of firing the chosen three thousand. Thus the union, led by the eloquent *"pasionaria,"* Mme Nora Tréhel, initially saw its job as helping Talbot to get through a bad pass. The much weaker, leftish, and formerly Catholic labor union, the Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (C.F.D.T.), took the lead in striking, decrying the absence of working-class participation in the decision. (In fact, its objections arose in large part because it had been excluded from the back-room dealing that led to the firings.) The C.G.T., now identified with the firings, had to act vigorously to save face. Mme Tréhel denounced Talbot for mismanagement and its goal of "multinationalizing" at the expense of French jobs. And in the middle of all this were the immigrant workers of Talbot who had the most to lose. Who was on *their* side?

FRANCE'S CURRENT industrial quandary goes back to the 1960s. Under Charles de Gaulle, the country had made impressive, even miraculous, gains in per capita income, consumer spending, and international trade. In the boom conditions which then existed, it had also been possible for governments to cushion a number of economically vulnerable but politically central industries—coal and steel, shipbuilding, textiles, and the like. After 1974, however, stagflation and declining world trade threatened these sectors. The government of Giscard d'Es-

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taing, despite its free-market rhetoric, essentially perpetuated the use of artifical respiration to maintain ailing firms. With French elections in the 1970s being decided by minuscule shifts of 1 percent or less of the voters, Giscard had to act according to political, not ideological, considerations. The victory of Mitterrand in 1981 came, in part, because the right was having increasing problems juggling its policies between the need to do reconstructive surgery on French industry and the political imperative of limiting the rise of unemployment.

With the future heavily mortgaged by the laxity of his predecessors, Mitterrand faced a nasty situation. If his economic innovations failed, he would be forced to perform drastic economic surgery. The left's core political support—the working class and others—had strong reasons to shy away from the painful decisions that accompany industrial modernization. Mitterrand's political future, as well as France's industrial future, could be endangered.

IT DID NOT take long for the Socialists' optimistic schemes to founder. The hoped-for American recovery did not begin until two years after the French thought it would, and its international benefits turned out to be minimal. As a result, the pumping-up of demand in France mainly encouraged the purchase of more German goods, while increasing inflation, enlarging national indebtedness, and creating a huge balance-of-payments problem.

In June 1982 and again in March 1983 the government prescribed anti-inflationary austerity, including temporary wage and price controls, tax increases, and currency export controls. In addition, to help resolve international trade difficulties, the franc was twice devalued. Naturally these steps held down living standards. Street demonstrations followed, and so did government losses in local elections.

The government described the austerity measures as a temporary and necessary expedient until France's accounts could be straightened out. Employment levels were maintained (largely through such artificial means as job retraining programs, public works, and the like), and the public was told that despite setbacks, the broad outlines of "Atari Socialism" would be preserved and eventually France would prosper anew.

But the Talbot firings have turned out to be just the beginning. Large numbers of jobs are also on the line outside the auto industry—in steel, coal mining, shipbuilding, and textiles, to name a few. Despite high expectations, the newly nationalized industrial groups, which include France's largest oligopolies, are in trouble. The Socialists and Communists, who had believed prior to nationalization that these companies were profitable, learned that the profits were imaginary and the productive inefficiencies widespread. Many of them too will have to make major personnel cuts if they are to become internationally competitive. France's wildly expensive distribution system—too many middlemen, too many government-protected retailers—also needs to be made more efficient. Moreover, the central industries whose modernization is at stake have been nourishing a universe of subcontractors and dependents. Hundreds of thousands of jobs and, in some cases, entire regions of France are threatened.

Letting unemployment rise is politically dangerous. If it goes unchecked, it will undercut the left's already sagging base of electoral support, alienate the unions, and create new strains between the Socialists and their Communist coalition partners. The far-reaching reforms which Mitterrand has brought about—in economic structures, industrial relations, and governmental decentralization—either haven't had time to work or have worked in ways that ordinary people find hard to understand. Austerity and the fear of unemployment, on the other hand, are not difficult for anyone to perceive.

The left coalition will face general elections by mid-1986 at the latest. If it is to allow itself a year or so to patch together its electoral position, then 1984 is the time to do it. How will the Mitterrand government approach this new stage? It is too early to tell for sure, but Talbot, with its multilevel back-room dealing among government, employers, and unions, may be a preview. Some unions may help promote social peace during the upheaval; the C.G.T., for instance, is shackled to moderation as long as Communists remain ministers. But others, the C.F.D.T. in particular, have little reason to work with the government, and perhaps something to gain from encouraging protest. The left has already lost a considerable amount of working-class electoral support, both to abstention and to an extreme right that specializes in racist xenophobia against France's immigrant population. Massive layoffs are hardly likely to improve the situation. A full-scale industrial protest, which cannot be ruled out, would present the government with unappetizing new choices. How does a Socialist government deal gracefully with a strike wave against its policies?

WHEELING AND dealing in smoke-filled rooms, Talbot-style, is likely but unpromising. The alternative of using simple economic brutality to chop jobs, à la Reagan and Thatcher, is unthinkable in Socialist France—it would break the left's political back and destroy its raison d'être for years to come. It would also create rich political opportunities for the tough French neoconservatives, such as the mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac.

Political and economic creativity is obviously called for. One solution might be a nationally negotiated plan for industrial modernization between employers and unions. Mitterand could spell out the longer-term benefits of industrial modernization in order to gain cooperation in enduring the short-run discomfort. Such imaginative initiatives seem unlikely, however, to come from the current government. Brave talk about medium-term industrial policy has not disappeared altogether, but shorter-term crisis management and book balancing have assumed pride of place. Moreover, earlier mistakes have sharply limited the availability of public resources for investment in longer-term projects.

And finally, the Socialist core of the government is now largely consumed by quarrels over the premiership (Prime

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Minister Pierre Mauroy is scheduled to retire soon). The Communist minority is uneasy in its junior partner's role and likely to become more unwilling to assume the task of providing social peace in support of unpopular policies. Indeed, its central preoccupation, rebuilding its own strength, may ultimately lead it away from such things. President Mitterrand himself has thus far been timid in dealing with the problems of industrial modernization and job loss in public. His skills lie more in political maneuvering than in economic leadership.

Short of miracles, the experiment of French left government is blocked. Many of the reforms that the government legislated were needed and will pay off in the future. Decentralization, for example, will provide long overdue relief for local entrepreneurs. Changes in industrial relations may create a more cooperative environment on the shop floor. Investment in research and development may accelerate the development of the French electronics industry. But the French experiment has also demonstrated, alas, that much of the accumulated conventional wisdom of the left—Keynesianism, statism, social voluntarism—is little better at overcoming the current economic crisis than is that of the right, which Anglo-Saxons have come to know so well under Reagan and Thatcher.

GEORGE ROSS

George Ross is a professor of sociology at Brandeis University and a senior associate at Harvard University's Center for European Studies.

Goodbye to the affordable house.

MORTGAGE SHORTAGE

LAST FALL thousands of young New Yorkers camped out with blankets and lawn chairs at banks across the state waiting to apply for subsized, low-interest mortgages. In New Jersey, a 30-year-old man told of getting to the Globe Mortgage Company at 6 A.M. only to find that "there were already fifty people in line there, and officials said they had only $300,000 of the money." And in Boston applicants waited in front of the Five Cent Savings Bank from Thursday until Monday morning. One of them told a reporter, "If I could get a mortgage for a shack, I'd take it."

For a generation of young Americans, even that shack will be increasingly hard to buy. In a time of high real interest rates, inflated housing costs, and deregulation of financial institutions affordable mortgages have become a thing of the past. Meanwhile, longstanding federal tax policies, untouched by Republicans and Democrats alike, subsidize mansion owners at the expense of middle-class homeowners.

The situation was very different for the parents of today's first-time home buyers. In 1950 about 70 percent of all American families could afford to purchase a house, if often with great difficulty. By 1980, according to political scientist Walter Dean Burnham, "first-time homeowning remained a possibility for far less than one-quarter of families seeking household formation." This trend seems to be worsening. The National Association of Realtors says that purchasing a typical home now requires an income 20 percent above the national median; in 1977 the same home was affordable with an income 17 percent below the median.

The high cost of housing is changing the way Americans live. More and more people in their mid-20s are being forced to move back in with their parents. Other graduates of the baby boom are the prime customers of the condominium and cooperative craze, and court cases challenging "no children" lease clauses are increasing because many young couples who are ready to have children have no savings. Moreover, declining home ownership rates compound the stiff competition for affordable rental housing. The burdens, not the benefits, of our economy are trickling down.

YOUNG PEOPLE wanting to buy their own homes are being pulled under by a wave of economic change. The transformation of the U.S. economy—call it post-industrialism, de-industrialization, or what you will—is diminishing the long-term economic prospects of the middle class. As Bob Kuttner noted recently in the *Atlantic*, "workers in the fastest-growing industries are earning, on average, $5,000 a year less than workers in industries that are declining or that are growing most slowly." Twenty-five years ago steelworkers and auto workers were buying homes. Today those in what Kuttner calls the "declining middle"—word processors, cashiers, and clerks—may never be able to afford a home.

In addition, the regulatory framework that helped to house previous generations is being rapidly dismantled. Representative Charles Schumer, a member of the House Banking Committee and a critic of deregulation, says, "The uncertainty caused by deregulating interest rates makes it too risky for an institution to hold more than a small proportion of its assets in long-term fixed-rate loans"—precisely the type of investment previously dedicated to affordable home loans. The deregulation of housing finance will place home buyers in direct competition for investment dollars with acquisitive conglomerates and other borrowers. And consumers will pay accordingly. Schumer's conclusion: "the days of the 8 percent thirty-year mortgage are gone forever."

Washington has not been unaware of the housing crunch, but the Reagan Administration has done nothing to seriously address it. In 1980 Congress changed the tax laws to direct mortgage revenue bond financing to struggling new home buyers. The fortunate ones who got these special mortgages received credit roughly 4 percent below the prevailing rate, for a savings of approximately

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$148 per month on a thirty-year, $60,000 mortgage. But Senator Robert Dole and other Congressional critics argued that such tax-exempt financing is too expensive, and proposed instead a system of tax credits for moderate-income home buyers. Last December, while Congress was still debating how to sew a small patch on the fraying tax code, the mortgage revenue bond provision expired. The question may be taken up again this spring, but for now the weekend vigils for subsidized mortgages have ceased.

Notwithstanding Senator Dole's complaints, the cost of mortgage revenue bonds is negligible compared to the cost of the older complex of homeowner tax subsidies. The "tax expenditure" for mortgage revenue bonds averaged out to roughly $400 million per year. By comparison, one homeowner tax preference (the deduction for mortgage interest payments) kept $25 billion out of the federal treasury last fiscal year—a 62 percent increase since 1980. And this revenue loss is mounting. The Senate Budget Committee estimates that mortgage interest deductions will reach $45 billion by 1985.

These subsidies, unaltered since they were written into the original 1913 income tax law, channel private dollars into homeownership as welfare for the rich. The system pays $50 of each $100 in mortgage interest costs for families with incomes of $200,000; $19 of each $100 in interest costs for families with incomes of $20,000; and nothing to families making $3,000. Unlimited and untargeted, this homeowner tax shelter gives enormous benefits to the haves, smaller benefits to the have-lesses, and no benefits to the have-nots.

WHILE YOUNG Americans were lining up to get mortgage revenue bond financing, older and wealthier homeowners were being quietly subsidized by the middle-income American taxpayer. Under this peculiar system, suburban mansions, vacation homes, and luxury condominiums receive a far greater federal subsidy than modest urban row houses, bedroom-community bungalows, and small farm houses. Tenants are shut out altogether.

This subsidy system fans the flames of inflation in the housing market. As prices of homes rose one and one-half times faster than prices generally through the 1970s, it became progressively more difficult for young people to enter the market. Earlier generations have been propelled onward and upward by housing inflation and tax incentives to "trade up." Today's young generation has trouble buying first homes because of the credit barrier and unaffordable home prices.

This new generation gap makes unlimited and untargeted tax deductions for well-to-do homeowners a luxury that America can no longer afford. Government ought to help more Americans finance their first home without wasting tax dollars on those who least need help. To be sure, homeowner deductions are considered so politically sacrosanct that Congress has never held hearings on their costs and benefits. The current leading progressive tax reform proposal—the Bradley-Gephardt "Fair Tax"—eliminates virtually every other deduction, yet avoids homeowner tax preferences entirely. Democrats concerned about deficits and fairness should bring this issue into the political arena.

Other countries target homeowner tax benefits in several ways. Germany, Austria, and France limit the amount of the allowable deduction. Australia progressively pegs the tax subsidy to income. Canada, Ireland, and Australia provide a one-time grant to all first-time home buyers in order to help lift young families over the financial barrier. Canada's program, begun in June 1982, gives tax-free $3,000 grants to any first-time home buyer who can make a 10 percent down payment.

IN THE United States a modest "mansion cap" on mortgage interest deductions could be used to assist young home buyers without raising tax rates. One version of the cap, a $10,000 per year limit on this deduction would save $1.2 billion this year, according to the Congressional Budget Office. If this money were directly channeled to existing state mortgage agencies to offer below-market mortgages, an estimated twenty-two thousand additional young American families could become homeowners. Or, by following in Canada's footsteps and distributing the money as one-time direct grants, we could assist well over one hundred thousand needy home buyers every year. Almost 45 percent of the bill would be paid by people with annual incomes greater than $100,000—people who least of all need large tax subsidies to afford a home.

The mansion cap could also aid community renewal efforts. For instance, many of the most recent batch of low-interest mortgages offered by the State of New York Mortgage Agency were concentrated in neighborhoods abutting the South Bronx. Surely this would be a wiser use of our tax dollars than tax shelters that subsidize wealthy people's vacation homes and luxury condominiums. By fostering greater opportunity without raising tax rates, such a mansion cap would be an effective example of balanced-budget liberalism.

Even the Reagan Administration may recognize the political impact of the new generation gap. In an uncharacteristic burst of outspokenness, Samuel Pierce, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, recently reversed his position on mortgage revenue bonds, and came out in favor of extending them for one year. Nevertheless, the continuing clamor for fairer taxes should push us toward reforming regressive homeownership subsidies. The question isn't whether to subsidize or not to subsidize—the government already allocates capital for housing—but who should pay and who should benefit. Federal tax policy should encourage homes, not shelters.

JOHN SIEGAL

John Siegal is a research associate with the Democracy Project, a public policy institute in New York and Washington.

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GM's pact with Toyota is a cover for surrender.

COLLUSION COURSE

BY ROBERT B. REICH

JUST ABOUT one year ago—on February 17, 1983, to be precise—General Motors and Toyota announced plans for the joint manufacture of a subcompact car in the United States. General Motors would contribute its assembly plant in Fremont, California, and $20 million in cash. Toyota would kick in $150 million in cash. The car, a front-wheel-drive version of the Toyota Corolla, which Toyota already produces and sells in Japan, would be called, in its American version, the Chevrolet Sprinter. About two hundred fifty thousand cars would be produced annually.

The only thing unusual about this arrangement was its two participants. These are not mom and pop operations. General Motors is the largest manufacturer of cars in the world. It sells 44 percent of the cars people buy in the United States. Toyota is Japan's largest car maker and the third largest in the world. In the U.S. market Toyota ranks number four, just after Chrysler. In sales of subcompacts within the United States Toyota ranks number three, ahead of Chrysler. Both GM and Toyota have long set the pace for the other automobile companies in their home markets in prices, styling, and innovation. Not surprisingly, the two companies are, and have been for a dozen years, the most profitable auto manufacturers on the globe.

For the past ninety-four years the United States government has enforced, with varying degrees of ardor, laws that prohibit companies from monopolizing or restraining trade. Antitrust concepts have a certain charming obscurity about them, and no two lawyers who specialize in this fascinating corner of the law share precisely the same notions about what is or is not permissible. But of this much we can be sure: when the largest and near-largest firms in a market comprised of just a few large firms collude with one another, agreeing on a price at which to sell their goods and exchanging information about products and marketing strategies, something questionable is happening in the eyes of the law. At the very least, an arrangement has been made which might easily cause prices to rise.

And so the Federal Trade Commission spent last year investigating the planned joint venture between General Motors and Toyota. Its three Reagan-appointed commissioners, a majority, have now concluded that the plan (ever so slightly modified) is fine. The decision—which becomes final in late February—will dramatically accelerate a change already underway in the American automobile industry. The F.T.C. majority's logic, spelled out in a public statement, bears careful notice as well, because it represents one of the first in what surely is to become a long line of government decisions expressly modifying traditional law in light of international competition. It marks the beginning of a more explicit national industrial policy. And, sadly, it is wrong.

The commissioners were persuaded of the wisdom of the venture primarily on the grounds that it offers General Motors a "valuable opportunity" to learn firsthand about Japanese manufacturing and management. GM can thereby become a more efficient company. "If GM can learn how to build significantly lower-cost cars, as Japanese producers can now do, it will attempt to implement those lower-cost methods at its other plants," noted the commissioners. In recent years the interpretation and enforcement of antitrust laws have demonstrated increasing respect for whatever efficiencies might possibly be imputed to an agreement among firms, but this particular sort of efficiency—learning by colluding—has never before been thought of sufficient merit to pass even the mildest muster. Applied generally, this new principle of antitrust analysis would seem to permit any two companies to combine so long as one was better at doing something than the other.

But the commissioners had something rather more special in mind. The benefits of learning how to produce cars efficiently presumably would extend beyond General Motors. GM would show other U.S. automakers that "the Japanese system can work in America." This would lead inexorably to "a more efficient, more competitive U.S. automobile industry." At last we get to the logical core of the argument, the new rule being enunciated. The real justification for allowing America's largest car company to team up with Japan's largest car company is to improve the international competitiveness of the U.S. automobile industry. According to the commission's majority, this long-term national benefit outweighs whatever risk that the arrangement might cause car prices to rise in the near term.

The commissioners' goal is unobjectionable. To be in favor of enhancing U.S. competitiveness these days is not exactly controversial. But to their real credit, these Reagan appointees managed to transcend the White House's ideological revulsion toward industrial policy and accurately perceive that a decision either way would affect

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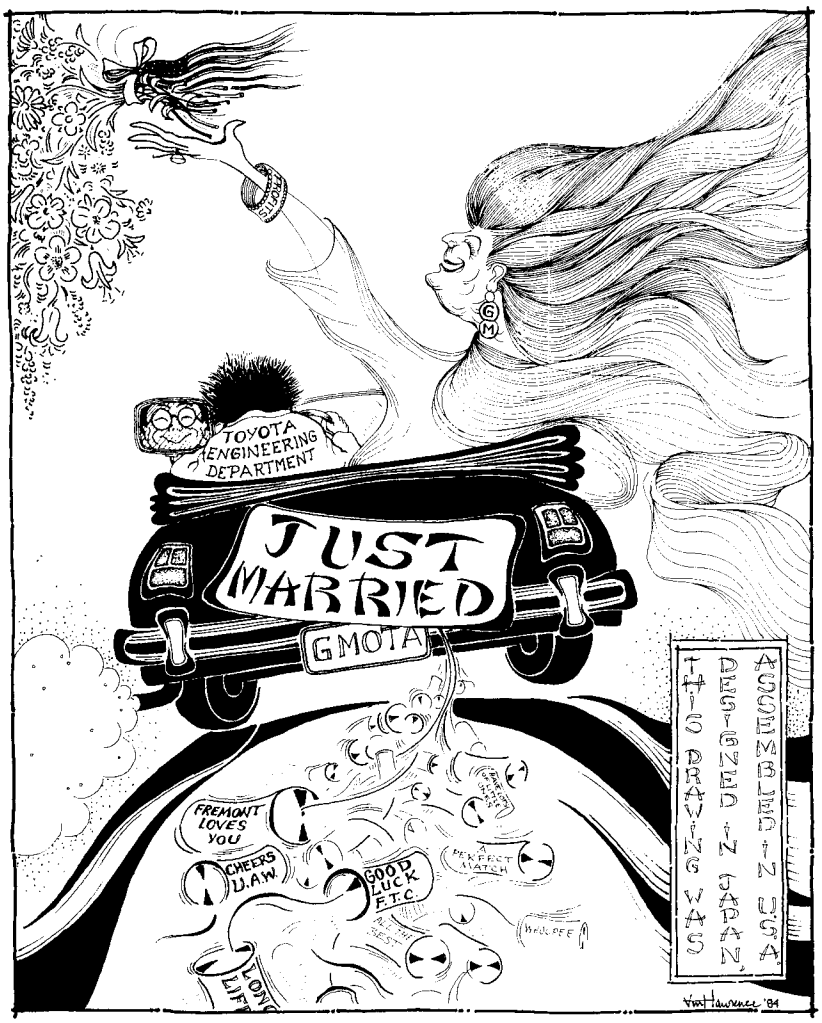
the structure of American industry for years to come. The question to be addressed in this case, as in countless government decisions about tax rules, tariffs and quotas, federal procurement contracts, loan guarantees, and research grants, is: What is our national competitive strategy to be?

They asked the right question. It was their answer that was wrong. To understand why, we have only to examine how the world automobile industry is evolving.

The world automobile market is a $250 billion-a-year business, not counting sales of parts, secondhand cars, repair, and service. World car production peaked in 1978 at 31.8 million vehicles, and is now inching back from the 1982 trough of 27.5 million. Japan accounts for roughly 25 percent of this output; the United States, for 23 percent. The United States is a net importer of cars; Japan exports more than 50 percent of its production. The industry is a major employer in all industrialized nations: in Japan 8.9 percent of the working population is directly involved in producing cars; 4.3 percent of U.S. workers are similarly dedicated. If subcontractors, component manufacturers, dealers, advertisers, mechanics, and other related occupations are included, the figures rise to 18 percent and 16 percent, respectively. Many of these jobs, moreover, pay quite well. Relative to other industrial workers worldwide, auto workers are highly productive.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The most dramatic development in the world automobile industry over the past decade, as in so many other industries, has been the success of the Japanese. Between 1975 and 1980 alone, Japanese production rose from 4.6 to 7 million vehicles. Japan's exports more than doubled, from 1.8 to 4.2 million. But it would be wrong to conclude from this that Japan's national economic strategy turns on automobile production. The auto industry in Japan is no longer a particularly favored sector; it enjoys none of the special tax preference, low-interest credit allocations, antitrust exemptions, or consumer subsidies that are had by fledgling companies in such fields as biotechnology or computers. Strength in the world automobile market is not an end in itself for the Japanese. Their long-term goal is not simply to sell more cars. It is to gain world dominance in the knowledge-intensive industries of the future. Automobile production—or more accurately, the design and fabrication of complex auto parts and the processes necessary to put them together—is a means toward that end. This point bears further elaboration.

Regardless of whose nameplates grace their exteriors, today's automobiles increasingly are multinational creations. Economies of scale and experience, together with political exigencies, are coming to require that parts be produced wherever on the globe they can be manufactured most cheaply, and assembled in the region of the globe where the finished cars are to be sold. It is a safe bet that twenty years from now General Motors cars will bear no special relationship to the United States, and Toyota no special connection with Japan. One no longer will be able to speak with pride (or derision) about an "American" automobile any more than about a "Japanese" or "West German" automobile. Regardless of where corporate headquarters is located, shareholders, lenders, managers, workers, and consumers alike will be drawn from all over the globe.

But there will be at least one important difference among nations. Workers' real wages—their standard of living—will depend upon the portion of the production process for which they have responsibility. Since assembly operations will be highly automated worldwide, with robots handling most tasks, the critical distinctions among national work forces will depend upon which components they specialize in producing. Workers engaged in making such relatively simple parts as seatcovers, windshield wipers, and dashboards, for example, will not command

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the same rewards in the global economy as those engaged in more complex tasks. Indeed, the proportional contribution of world auto sales to a nation's wealth will turn on the relative value added to automobile production by that nation's work force. National competitiveness in the automobile industry, as in many other global industries, will come to depend upon national prowess in the higher-valued aspects of production.

The Japanese understand this prospect. They are bent on capturing the highest-valued portions of world auto production. They intend to specialize in such parts as engines and transaxles (front-wheel drive transmissions and axles), and in such processes as robots and computer-controlled systems for putting all the parts together. These products and processes, in turn, rely upon advanced microelectronics and on strong but lightweight synthetic materials and alloys. They thereby represent specific commercial applications of Japan's emerging knowledge-based industries.

The overall strategy is clear. It is the same strategy that underlies Japan's recent, rapid shifts into aircraft engines, video cassette recorders, telecommunications devices, and personal computers. These products are launching-pads for gaining scale and experience in the world's newest technologies. Attaining immediate profits from these products is less important than becoming the largest and most experienced world practitioners of the advanced methods which lay behind them. A Japanese labor force so attuned will easily come to dominate the highest-valued portions of any global industry. There is nothing sinister about this; consumers all over the globe continue to benefit from Japan's advances, although Japan eventually will enjoy the world's highest standard of living. Viewed in this light, the Japanese automobile strategy is part of an overall national strategy by which the Japanese will become the design engineers for the world.

JAPAN'S AUTOMOBILE strategy is well underway. GM already buys its diesel engines from Isuzu. Chrysler buys its transaxles from Mitsubishi and plans to purchase one hundred fifty thousand Mitsubishi engines this year. Ford gets many of its complex parts from Toyo Kogyo (Mazda). In Ohio and Britain Honda is assembling cars whose designs and more sophisticated components come from Japan. Nissan is assembling trucks in Tennessee and cars in Britain and Spain; their designs and highest-valued parts also come from Japan.

This trend is particularly apparent in the production of the smallest cars, which must be designed and manufactured especially carefully in order to minimize costs and maximize comfort. As the Japanese have learned in producing everything from televisions to semiconductors, innovations in products and manufacturing processes often occur at the most compact end of a product line, where the engineering challenges are the greatest. For the same reason, development expenses often are highest at the compact end. If your strategy is to gain scale and experience in applying new technologies, then you will gladly bear these costs; the investment will pay off in a work force better able to innovate in the future. But if your strategy is to maximize profits over the next three or four years, you will buy the compact technology from someone else. Accordingly, the Japanese are developing it; the Americans are buying it.

Subcompact automobile technology—including the design, advanced parts, and machines for assembling the parts according to the designs—is now being ceded to the Japanese. GM is seeking to import subcompacts from Suzuki and Isuzu, and to assemble "R" cars now being produced by Isuzu; it has given up its plan to build an S-body Corsa in the United States, it is phasing out the Chevette, and its futurist Saturn model is barely on the drawing board. Chrysler has quietly abandoned its planned replacement for the Omni/Horizon family of cars and is looking to Mitsubishi to fill out its subcompacts. Ford has just announced a $500 million investment in Mexico, where it will assemble a Toyo Kogyo subcompact.

THE PROPOSED joint venture between General Motors and Toyota fits this pattern exactly. The cars that are to roll out of the Fremont, California, assembly plant will be designed in Japan; their engines, transaxles, and other advanced components will be manufactured in Japan; many of the robots and computerized machine tools used to assemble them will be designed and produced in Japan. Left to American labor will be the lower-skilled assembly tasks, production of the simpler parts, and, of course, advertising, sales, and repair services to be offered in the United States.

The irony of all this is that America is perhaps now better able to take on the higher-valued portions of automobile production than at any time in the last decade. U.S. workers are becoming more productive. Unit labor costs in Japan are increasing rapidly. The American market is growing again: 9.2 million new cars were sold here last year, the best year since 1979, and in 1984 sales may reach 10 million. American automakers are profitable again; after losing $4.7 billion between 1980 and 1982, the Big Three had aggregate profits in 1983 of around $6.5 billion. Since 1981, when Japan began "voluntarily" restricting its auto exports to the United States, the average retail selling price for all new cars sold in America has risen by 18.8 percent (or $1,741) more than the Consumer Price Index. If there was ever a time for U.S. automakers to invest in the future, it is now.

But here's the rub. GM, Ford, and Chrysler have grown more profitable largely by cutting their costs and selling bigger cars based on older models. Over the past three years the three companies have closed ten huge assembly plants, slashing capacity by more than two million cars and trucks a year. They have shut down vast networks of parts plants. They have laid off one quarter of their work force. They have canceled or delayed at least a dozen new products. Altogether the Big Three have managed to cut more than $10 billion out of their annual costs. They are now "lean and mean," which is the way corporate manag-

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ers in America like to describe the newly dismembered companies over which they preside. They are approaching the current economic recovery cautiously, for fear that it may be short-lived. They are adding workers slowly, relying on the presently employed to put in substantial overtime. They are investing in new models only gradually, extending the lives of older models by making slight alterations.

GENERAL MOTORS, with over 40 percent of the American market, accounting for two-thirds of the sales of the U.S.-based manufacturers, leads this timid pack. Its costs are the lowest, its profits highest. But it worries about the next downturn in the business cycle. Its "planning horizon" is three years. If GM finds a new way to cut its costs, Ford and Chrysler must follow suit or else run the risk of losing even more of the market. GM has decided that it is cheaper to buy subcompact technology from Japan than to invest in it at home. And the cheapest way to buy subcompact technology from Japan is to get the Japanese to foot part of the bill for jointly assembling Japanese cars in America. That is what the joint venture with Toyota is all about. It is a white flag of surrender. Other U.S. automakers will see it and follow.

Joint ventures like this one fit nicely into Japan's automobile strategy, making it worth the extra cost. They create an immediate demand for Japanese designs, sophisticated components, and high-technology manufacturing systems. Yet because they appear to save American jobs, they also forestall mounting political pressures in the United States to protect against Japanese imports. Indeed, the United Auto Workers is quite supportive of the GM-Toyota plan. Never mind the jobs preserved or created in America will be lower-skilled and routine, eventually to be replaced by robots and computers. In the immediate future at least, there are jobs. To American workers the obvious alternative seems far less salutary.

Is there any other alternative? Surely not the proposal, touted by the United Auto Workers Union, that cars sold in the United States must contain a high percentage of components produced in America. Even if 90 percent of the value of cars sold here were produced here, Japan still would be supplying the most sophisticated 10 percent, and simultaneously supplying the rest of the globe (including GM, Ford, and Chrysler operations abroad) with an even larger percentage—thereby maintaining superior scale and experience at the highest-valued end of world auto production. More to the point, the "domestic content" proposal gives companies no real incentive to invest in advanced automobile technologies within the United States. When pressed, they can simply duplicate whatever technologies already have been perfected in Japan. Meanwhile, everyone who buys a car in the United States gets stuck with a huge price tag reflecting the higher cost of making cars in America. We lose both ways.

There is no simple solution. Japan's competitive strategy embraces its entire industrial base; America's strategy is the by-product of individual corporate strategies whose goals may have little to do with enhancing the standard of living of Americans. To reverse the present trend and gain predominance in the highest-valued portions of world auto production would require that auto companies operate under a very different set of incentives than they do today. At the least, such a reversal would entail changes in tax laws, international trade laws, and antitrust rules. For example, Congress or the Special Trade Representative might have linked Japan's "voluntary" export restraint to explicit agreements by U.S. automakers to invest in advanced automobile technologies and to train their workers in these emerging fields. We missed this opportunity; the automakers got the benefits of the export restraint with no strings attached.

The proposed GM-Toyota joint venture represented another small opportunity to move the auto industry in the right direction. To be sure, had the Federal Trade Commission rejected the proposed venture, that would not have stemmed the tide; at best, it might have slowed it down a bit. Antitrust law is a crude means of fashioning industrial policy. But the commissioners might have used the occasion to announce a different direction for antitrust enforcement in the future, perhaps encouraging joint research ventures among American companies, and clearly signaling the strategic perils for the American economy that lay in the path GM and Toyota had chosen. If they in fact believed the dubious contention that the venture would help the entire U.S. automobile industry, moreover, the commissioners might have called GM's bluff and required the arrangement be a public "demonstration project" in which Ford and Chrysler were invited to participate. But the commissioners did none of these things. By approving the venture instead, and doing so on such broad grounds, they have opened the floodgates.

IN COMING years we can now expect more Japanese-U.S. joint ventures in automobiles and in a wide variety of other products. Americans increasingly will be called upon to assemble and distribute to one another kits made in Japan. Americans will continue to be inventive, of course, but increasingly our inventions will be embedded within new technologies produced across the Pacific. We will have jobs, but they will be relatively humble ones. We will have access to high-quality, low-cost products, but we will be poor relative to other industrialized nations better able than we to take a longer, more strategic view of their economies. Meanwhile, we will continue to indulge ourselves in an endless debate about the wisdom of creating a national industrial policy as if it were a matter of centralized planning boards and development banks. We need to acknowledge that strategic issues underlie even the most seemingly pedestrian antitrust questions, decided by even the most pedestrian federal agencies—like whether GM and Toyota should be allowed to join forces in Fremont, California.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

All For Love

The first two films by the French director Diane Kurys, born 1948, were *Peppermint Soda* and *Cocktail Molotov*, both of which were autobiographical. After the latter, I wrote (TNR, May 2, 1981) that, if Kurys could develop her perceptions about acting and if she "could strip some of the baby fat from her story sense, she could be a good filmmaker."

Entre Nous
(United Artists Classics)

Her third film, *Entre Nous*, shows that she has done those things and more, and is now more than good.

Entre Nous is biographical. Kurys has written and directed a film about her parents, though this is clear only at the end when she appends a closing note. The main characters are her father and mother, her mother's dear woman friend, and that woman's husband. The last shot, in 1952, is a four-year-old girl—Kurys under another name—watching silently as her parents finish their last conversation before a breach that was never healed. Those closing words tell us that her father left the next morning, that her parents never met again, that she dedicates *Entre Nous* to them and to her mother's woman friend. The film has given the reasons.

The mother, played by Isabelle Huppert, is first seen in 1942, still single, en route by bus to an internment camp in southern France. Only the music tells us that the bus is carrying Jews. In the camp a Foreign Legionnaire, Guy Marchand, on duty as a guard, smuggles a note to her, proposing marriage as a means of saving her. (He knows she will be shipped to Germany.) She accepts; marries; then discovers that he, too, is Jewish, though still unharassed in Vichy France. The scene in which she discovers that she has married, not immunity but the possibility of further trouble, is a gem of balance—outrage that is comic against a dark backdrop of fact. After the Germans move south, the pair escape, in great hazard, over the Alps to Italy.

Also in 1942 we see a young art student, Miou-Miou, and her lover, another artist, caught in a gunfight between partisans and French militia. Her lover is killed in her arms. We leap forward to 1952, in Lyons. Huppert and Marchand now have two daughters. (The younger is Kurys's proxy.) After a rough time, Marchand has been able to start a garage, works hard, worships his family. Huppert, as far as she knows, is happy.

Miou-Miou has married an unsuccessful, unscrupulous actor, Jean-Pierre Bacri, charming but not quite charming enough. They have a small son. Because of that son and Huppert's daughters, the two women meet, at a children's play. They become close friends. Eventually the two couples become friends, though not as close.

The need of each woman for the other is clear. Through Miou-Miou, who is a sculptor, Huppert finds reaches of imaginative response that Marchand can't open to her. From Huppert the other woman gets solidity of self, an emotional competency, that her husband, the actor, can't provide. Very soon, each woman realizes that her life would seem empty without the other.

Each husband shows some sexual interest in the other wife but not for long. The actor makes moves toward Huppert virtually out of reflex, then quits. Marchand is almost sullenly excited by Miou-Miou; his feeling is converted to, or fuels, his resentment of her invasion of his wife's emotional being. He forbids Huppert to associate with the other woman. Huppert secretly persists, is found out, still persists. Huppert then opens a boutique, financed with difficulty by her husband. He later learns that Miou-Miou is a partner, and he smashes the shop to bits. This leads to the last scene—of nonreconciliation.

The focus of the film is women's love, not necessarily lesbianism. The lesbian possibility is only gently suggested once, by two scenes that come close together. On a train to Paris where she will meet Miou-Miou to shop for their boutique, Huppert allows a soldier she has just met to make love to her. When she meets Miou-Miou, she tells her friend about it and admits that the encounter produced her first orgasm. That night the women are in twin beds in a hotel. Huppert touches the other one's hand, then withdraws.

But what this picture is most impressively about is its own texture: the delicacy and fullness with which Kurys has woven her world. The picture *progresses*. While the characters move through their lives to their meeting and its consequences, that progress is enriched by discursive episodes—like one in which Miou-Miou's little boy accidentally locks himself in a toilet—that don't advance the story yet are enriching. This means of course, that the characters have been brought to a pitch of life where virtually anything they do is of some interest.

In purely filmic terms Kurys is now quite sure of herself, so that she understates, is almost laconic. This is particularly helpful in a film charged with high feeling, and it's particularly evident in the subtle pulse of her editing. Also, Kurys uses that common-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

And the Ship Sails On. Fellini's latest, about an Italian liner on a strange voyage in July 1914. The allegory is good enough to empower Fellini's best work since *Amarcord*. (Reviewed 2/13/84)

Dear Maestro. An exceptional first film, Italian, about musicians. The rivalry of two conductors, 40, friends, reveals more to us than to them. (2/6/84)

Gorky Park. A thriller that thrills, set mostly in Moscow. Well directed and, except for the leading role, well acted. (2/6/84)

Reuben, Reuben. Patently based on Dylan Thomas's last days in America. Movingly acted by Tom Conti and, as his last love, Kelly McGillis. Frazzled finish, but literate dialogue en route. (1/30/84)

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place device, period songs for a period picture, with some humor. A recurrent number is Perry Como's recording of "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now."

The picture's quality is sealed with the performances that Kurys gets from her three principals. (The actor fades.) Huppert has often been impressive, but in a tacitly suffering way, as in *The Lacemaker* and *The Judge and the Assassin*. Here she gives an outgoing performance, inflected in a range of colors, spontaneous and easy. I liked Miou-Miou in her first appearance here, in *Going Places*. (Huppert was also in that 1974 film.) She has grown tremendously and has certainly outgrown that cutesy name. She is a willowy beauty; she is also an actress of weight and wit, with a flavor of acceptance that is very far from resignation.

The most difficult of the three parts is Huppert's husband. As with all husbands in plays and films where our sympathy is meant to go to the wife, we must understand why she married him in the first place and stayed with him, or else the wife's character is diminished, as is the desired sympathy. Marchand creates winningly the man who would have offered marriage as he did when he did; who would quite literally have carried his wife across the snowy Alps to safety; who would have scrounged to make a postwar life for his family; would have adored them; and would have shortcomings of mind and spirit. The worst of it, for him, is that he perceives the gaps when someone else fills them for his wife. His rage, when he busts up the boutique, is not tyranny but impotence. He knows that he can't stop what will happen, either by barring his wife's way or by giving her what she gets from her friend. Marchand puts it all before us with warmth and vulnerability.

He is so good that he pushes to the front a question that has nothing to do with the film's making and, since the story is biographical, can't be a criticism of the script. It's a comment on behavior that is shown here as somewhat heroic, certainly worth approval. I couldn't help feeling—unpopularly, I suppose—that the Huppert character was cruel and selfish and ungrateful to leave her husband. Grant his patent deficiencies; grant that she loves her friend and will be happier with her. Out of what she had shared with her husband, not least the fact that twice he quite literally saved her life and the fact

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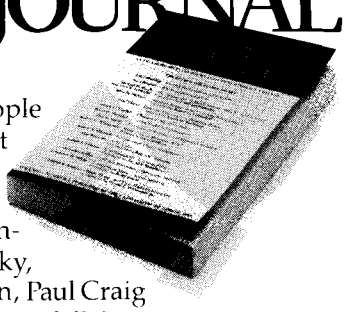

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that he deeply loved her and the two children she was taking, it's possible to think that she might have put her satisfactions aside in obligation to a good and loving man.

Before any hoots of male chauvinism arise, I insist that I would have felt the same if the roles had been reversed (and know this from experience with friends and ex-friends). I'm not advocating a return to Victorian pietistic ideas of marriage. I share Bernard Shaw's anger at ritual domestic self-sacrifice. But we have gone from an era of corseted inhuman restriction to an era of self-indulgence, where self-satisfaction is the primary, sometimes sole, criterion. That seems to me equally inhuman and uncivilized. It disregards the idea of honor. In the circumstances of this marriage as given, I thought the wife had a debt of honor to her husband. I couldn't help feeling that Marchand deserved better from her, that she might well have borne the diminution of happiness that staying with him would have brought, borne it as payment of a debt of honor and love. What I especially disliked was the film's assumption that of course we would understand that she had to do it—even if it hurt him—because she wanted to do it.

No apologies for this moralist conclusion. The film presents some lives so well that it forces a reaction to those lives as such. *Entre Nous* says that self-satisfaction is all. I don't agree.

The happiness of the long-distance artist.

GLIMPSES OF DE KOONING

BY KATHLEEN KEARNS

WILLEM de Kooning once described the pleasure he took in riding in a car and catching flashes of things as he went by; he has spoken of the content of his paintings as being no more than "slipping glimpses." His has been a career of constant stylistic innovation, but all along, it seems, he was trying to let the person looking at his work see those same quick, strong, and transient images that he did. The Whitney Museum's current exhibition of fifty years' worth of his paintings, drawings, and sculpture demonstrates the discipline of his approach, but it also reveals his playfulness. For all the dark psychological interpretations heaped upon some of his work, the de Kooning that emerges from this show is a pleasure-loving man.

Bright light and strong colors fill his paintings. His images are vibrant and, like glimpses from a car window, often elusive. Many of his paintings read like accumulations of visual impressions, conveyed in the same selective way the artist acquired and remembered them. The mouth of a figure may be almost simplistically clear, while cheeks, hair, and hands are suggestive streaks of paint. The shape and color of a pair of sprawled legs may be unmistakable, their exact connection to a body less important. His collected impressions may not always mesh: some of the paintings of the Women series, for instance, seem to be at once amused and indulgent and violent and despising. The complexity of his reactions is not limited to the figure; a landscape, conveyed in a collage of disparate shapes, can evoke a complicated state of mind.

His paintings retain these intimations of his complex feelings for his subjects, as well as suggestions of the process he went through in making the painting. If he changed his mind about the position of the hands on a figure, for instance, he might not paint over the original hands completely. In the painting *Two Men Standing* (c. 1938), he kept several versions of one figure's hands, with an odd effect. First, the hands seem to be moving, indicating something of the character of the person in the portrait: you suspect that he's agitated or nervous or indecisive. Second, the multiple hands evoke a curious feeling of identification with de Kooning the artist, a sense of vicarious participation in his decision-making. In trying to figure out why he changed his mind, you say yes, you were right, the hands work much better there. And third, because there are several versions of one line, each next to the other, a linear rhythm develops. Because there isn't just one line that is *the* line that demarcates the side of the hand, you're encouraged to look at the lines as lines, not simply as descriptions. Then you can enjoy, all by itself, this series of variations on a single shape.

ALMOST ALL of de Kooning's work encourages this kind of response. He seems to love the physical medium of paint, and pastel and charcoal and pencil and ink, and to delight in their possibilities. This becomes especially obvious when he begins to get further away from a particular and concrete subject, but you can see it in almost everything, even in paintings that at first seem deliberately non-sensual. There will be joyous streaks of color in the most forbidding surroundings, like the surge of violet in the otherwise distraught *Woman* of 1949-50. The strongest response to some works, like his untitled drawing of 1966-67 (*Figures in Landscape*), comes not from the shapes or what they might convey but from the sheer voluptuousness of the charcoal.

His exuberance about the act of painting comes through most clearly, however, in the abstract landscapes he did in the late 1950s and early 1960s. *Door to the River*, like several of the paintings he did around this time, is made with big, wide, dramatic brushstrokes, each of which is a shape in itself. The effect is as if he decided to be absolutely direct about what he was doing—as if he said, "This is paint. I am painting. What you see is the result of what I do, and what I am doing is putting a brush full of paint onto a canvas. The paint may make a shape, and the shape may remind you of something, or make you feel a certain way, but I want you to remember that it is still paint." To make sure that we do remember, he uses a housepainting brush, large, somewhat crude, and audacious. He lets us see the blurred, fuzzy mark where the bristles first touched canvas, the long pull of the stroke, the splashes of paint that sprayed out from the full brush, and the spiked and streaky edge where the

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brush was lifted off. These are marks that show the energy that went into their making. They are also marks with confidence behind them, a conviction that the painter's visceral knowledge of what he is painting will convey itself completely if it is put down directly enough.

Even when he was concerned with communicating the experience of painting, de Kooning was experimenting with colors, textures, and shapes in themselves. At times he deliberately worked without anything in mind, even, in some drawings from the 1950s and 1960s, without looking at the paper as he drew. Strangely though, some of the shapes that result seem to mean something, as if they were calligraphic symbols we can't quite understand. Some, like an untitled drawing of 1968, also seem to suggest human figures. It's unclear whether he intended this, but the results interest us in part because of their elusive resemblance to things we know.

WHEN, in his later work, he discards all reference to a specific subject, and even to ambiguously suggestive form, the result is an unprecedented incoherence. In his recent paintings, colors and shapes seem to rush at us randomly; forms all over the canvas demand equal attention. The structure evident in his earlier works is all but gone. And we are unable, for the first time, to imagine the emotions that spurred what is before us.

A statement he made once seems to indicate why this is so. "Forms," he said, "ought to have the emotion of a concrete experience." He seems to have meant not that forms necessarily have to look exactly like particular things, but that they should convey the same emotion we would have upon looking at the thing they refer to. "For instance," he went on, "I am very happy that grass is green." There is an emotional rightness to certain things. Grass is green and healthy and shiny, breasts are warm and fleshy and soft; shapes that look vaguely like grass or breasts to us instill particular responses. Even when we don't analyze them consciously, certain shapes, certain colors, have very particular emotional connotations.

The abstract qualities of de Kooning's paintings can affect us in the elusive way that we are affected by a particular shade of sunlight or a particular turn of ground, but his most successful paintings all deal somehow with real life. In some, the physical presence of the subject and the physical presence of the paint work together to create a double-layered sensuality; de Kooning's pleasure in the act of painting is matched by his evident enjoyment of his subject. In many of the Women paintings, this comes across as a kind of exuberant lewdness, often mixed with murkier feelings about sexuality. In *Two Women* and *Clam Diggers* (both painted in 1964, after the original Women series), the bawdiness is frank and joyful. *Two Women* is all reds and oranges and pinks, friendly, appreciative colors layered on in loose, wet strokes. The impression you get is of smeared lipstick and disheveled eroticism; the one woman we can see clearly appears floppily and contentedly drunk. Vague splashes of color in the background suggest Impressionist flowers; her red high-heel and can-can legs are reminiscent of Toulouse-Lautrec's café women. *Clam Diggers*, even more fleshy in its colors than *Two Women*, is likewise even more happily erotic. The women are painted in swirls of pink; arms, thighs, breasts are all soft curves. This is a painting by a happy man.

MORE IS going on here, though, than de Kooning expressing his enjoyment of his subject and his work. He is presenting an experience, as he does in *Door to the River*. There, he is dealing with a landscape: there is a brown/green streak that is perhaps a line of hills; there is a blue/gray river before it; there is a pale sky. But then there is that bright yellow form surging toward us, and a collection of pillars blocking our way, and the mysterious flesh color that is far too human to be part of a landscape at all. But even while our mind searches to define these parts and extrapolate a recognizable and coherent whole, we are taken by the vividness of the colors before us, by the precarious tension of that surging yellow form not quite anchored on anything, by the intriguing depths glimpsed behind that forest of columns. These brushstrokes de Kooning has put down have created a landscape, but a landscape of mood rather than strictly of topography. It is an elusive subject; we can't quite pin it down, just catch sight of it going by.

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The Romance of Commerce and Culture
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In which Rousseau teaches a certain gentleman to read and weep.

THE ORIGINS OF MODERN READING

BY ROBERT DARNTON

ALTHOUGH WE do it every day, reading remains a mystery. We are able to construe meaning from little figures printed on a page. But how? All the efforts of psychologists, philosophers, educators, and librarians have failed to explain this everyday miracle. If we could understand it, we might be able to penetrate the deeper mystery of how man makes sense of the world of symbols that his culture spins around him. Even then, we could not presume to know how people have read in other times and places. A proper history of reading would force us to confront the otherness in alien *mentalités*.

But where could such a history begin? We cannot look over the shoulders of people who lived centuries ago and question them as modern psychologists might. We can only ferret out whatever remains of their experience in libraries and archives. Even then we can rarely get beyond the retrospective testimony of a few great men about a few great books: Rousseau's recollections of reading Plutarch, for example, and Stendhal's of reading Rousseau. But one dossier—the only one in existence as far I know—makes it possible to follow the readings of an ordinary bourgeois in the course of an ordinary life in provincial France during the last two decades before the French Revolution.

I would like to present this dossier, making due disclaimers about its representativeness, or about the possibility of locating any typical Frenchman under the Old Regime. It comes from the archives of the Société typographique de Neuchâtel (S.T.N.), an important Swiss publisher of French books in the prerevolutionary period, and it concerns Jean Ranson, a merchant from La Rochelle. In 1774, when he began to correspond with the S.T.N., Ranson was 27. He had taken over his family's business in the silk trade after the death of his father, and he lived with his mother in the heart of the Rochelais Protestant community. The Ransons were well off, though not as wealthy as some of the families who lived from the Atlantic trade. According to the local notarial archives, Jean had inherited 20,000 livres from his father and had built it into a fortune of 66,600 livres by 1788. He was an upstanding citizen, active in the town mint and hospital; and he occupied a respectable position in La Rochelle's merchant oligarchy. Seventy-six witnesses signed his marriage contract in 1777. All but three of the men identified themselves as merchants ("*négociants*"). They included a former mayor, the director of the Chambre de commerce, two previous directors of the Chambre, and the flower of the Rochelais trading families: Raboteaus, Seignettes, Belins, Jarnacs, and Roberts.

Ranson's letters in Neuchâtel confirm the impression given by the documents in La Rochelle. They suggest that he was serious, responsible, hardworking, civic-minded, and rich—the very picture of the provincial bourgeois. Above all, he was Protestant. Like most Huguenots in France, his parents had made a formal avowal of Catholicism in order to provide their children with a civil status. Still, they wanted their son to have a solid Calvinist education. So they sent him to the *collège* in Neuchâtel, where he studied with Frédéric-Samuel Ostervald, a learned local notable who was to found the S.T.N. a few years later, in 1769. The French student developed a strong attachment to his Swiss master. When he returned to La Rochelle, they kept in touch by letter. When Ostervald took up publishing, Ranson bought books from him. He bought a great many, because he was an avid reader; the S.T.N., which did a huge business as a wholesale bookdealer in addition to its printing, could supply him with almost everything he wanted. Unlike the S.T.N.'s other correspondents, who were mainly booksellers, Ranson chatted about his literary interests and family life while sending in his orders. Thus his dossier—forty-seven letters amidst the fifty thousand of the S.T.N. papers—stands out in this commercial correspondence precisely because it is so uncommercial. It provides a rare view of a reader discussing his reading while going about the everyday affairs of life in a quiet corner of the provinces.

What did Ranson read? One cannot reconstruct his library, because he owned a great many books that he did not order from Neuchâtel. But his letters to the S.T.N.—which include orders for fifty-nine books over a period of eleven years—provide enough information for one to form a general idea of his taste and reading habits. Three areas of interest clearly stand out: children's literature, devotional works, and belles lettres.

The books for or about children represent a surprisingly large proportion—almost a third—of the works that Ranson ordered. Their importance can be explained by his interest in his own children, but there is more to it than that, as we shall see. Ranson's letters also indicate that he was a devout Protestant, and his books suggest that his piety shaded off into pietism. He kept calling in his letters for "good new sermons; France has been famished for them for a long time." He favored the moralistic preaching of Swiss and Dutch divines, which occasionally summons up the religion of Rousseau's Savoyard vicar. Finally, Ranson's religious convictions did not prevent him from ordering some works of the Enlightenment like the *Encyclopédie* and Raynal's *Histoire philosophique*. He even bought some books, Mercier's *Tableau de Paris* and the *Mémoires secrets* of Bachaumont, too unorthodox to clear the censorship in France; but his taste in belles lettres tended toward *sensiblerie*.

Robert Darnton is professor of history at Princeton University. A fuller version of this essay will appear in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, to be published this month by Basic Books.

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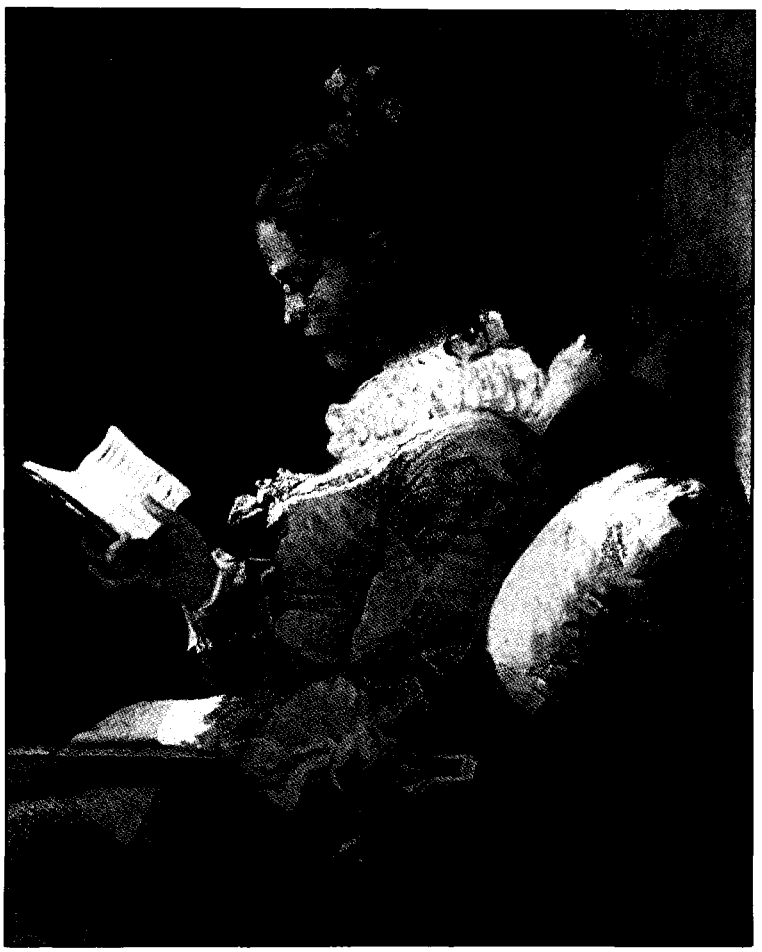
He especially liked the works of Mme de Genlis and, above all, of Rousseau—"l'Ami Jean-Jacques" as Ranson called him, although Jean-Jacques was a friend whom he had never met and could know only through the printed word. Ranson devoured everything he could find by Rousseau. He bought a twelve-volume set of the posthumously published writings and two editions of the complete works, one in eleven volumes and one in thirty-one volumes, which he ordered unbound as soon as they were published, "so as to have the full enjoyment of the work as soon as it arrives and not wait upon the binder, who is very negligent." He was as hungry for information about the writer as for copies of the writings. "I thank you, Monsieur," he wrote to Ostervald in 1775, "for what you were so kind as to tell me about l'Ami Jean-Jacques. You give me great pleasure every time you can send me anything about him."

Ranson was the perfect Rousseauistic reader. But how did he read? To pass from the *what* to the *how* of reading is an extremely difficult step. There is help available in Ranson's case, however, because he mentions the textbook on reading that he studied as a boy. In fact, he ordered several copies of it, as a gift for friends and to teach his own children how to read. This book, *Les Vrais Principes de la lecture (The True Principles of Reading)* by Nicolas-Antoine Viard, probably marked several generations of French readers. It went through at least twenty-four editions between 1763 and 1830, and seems to have been used extensively in French schools and homes. Viard tells you to begin with the smallest units of sound and to link letters, syllables, and words, so that you pass from the simple to the complex, avoiding irregularities until you can handle them, and fixing the connection between sounds and typographical symbols firmly in your mind. Before long you are getting through his drills all right:

> *Les bons livres s'impriment . . . soigneusement.*
> *Les mauvais livres se suppriment . . . promptement.*

But this does not suffice to get into an eighteenth-century frame of mind. Viard never goes beyond the unit of the single word and never offers a strategy for making sense of texts. In fact, Viard's textbook suggests that children learned to sound out words in eighteenth-century France pretty much as they do today.



A YOUNG GIRL READING, BY JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD, 1776

Rousseau himself had no patience for such pedagogy. He insists in *Emile* that the child learn to read late, when he is ripe for learning, without artificial exercises: "Any method will do for him." Yet reading is a theme that appears everywhere in Rousseau's works. It obsessed him. If we can understand his understanding of it, we might be able to get beyond the point where Viard left us and find another angle from which to read through eighteenth-century eyes.

Rousseau discussed his own induction into reading in the first pages of the *Confessions*:

> I don't know how I learned to read; I only remember my first readings and their effect on me: it is from that time that I date without interruption my consciousness of myself. My mother had left some novels. [She had died a few days after Jean-Jacques' birth.] My father and I began to read them after supper, at first only with the idea of using some amusing books for me to practice reading. But soon we took such a strong interest in them that we read without a break, taking turns throughout the whole night. We could never stop before reaching the end of a volume. And sometimes my father, hearing the swallows at the crack of dawn, would say shamefacedly, "Let's go to bed; I am more a child than you."

Having exhausted their stock of novels, they took volumes of Bossuet, Molière, La Bruyère, Ovid, and Plutarch from the libraries of the relatives of Jean-Jacques's mother, who came from a more cultivated milieu than his father, a watchmaker. While the father worked in his shop the son read to him, and they discussed the readings. Jean-Jacques's imagination caught fire, especially when he declaimed from Plutarch. He became the heroes that he read about, and he played out the dramas of antiquity in his Genevan apartment as if he had lived them in Athens and Rome. In retrospect it seemed to him that this experience had marked him for life—a life in which he never learned to distinguish between literature and reality.

The characters in Rousseau's great novel, *La Nouvelle Héloise*, throw themselves into reading with the same abandon. Because it is an epistolary novel, the plot unfolds through the exchange of letters. Living cannot be distinguished from reading, nor loving from the writing of love letters. Indeed, the lovers teach one another how to read just as they teach one another how to

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love. Saint-Preux devises a "method" for Julie: "To read little and to meditate a great deal upon our reading, or to talk it over extensively between ourselves, that is the way to thoroughly digest it." This was how Rousseau learned to read from his father—and how he later read with Mme de Warens according to the *Confessions*: "Sometimes I read beside her. I took the greatest pleasure in it; it exercised me in reading well. . . . When she drew morals from the text, she sometimes lost the thread a little in her reverie; but kissing her from time to time on the mouth or the hands, I was patient, and her interruptions did not bother me." Reading, living, loving—they were inseparable to the writer who lived more intensely in his imagination than he did in the rounds of daily life.

Thus the great enemy of "method" really had one of his own, the one he had learned from his father. The method consisted in "digesting" books so thoroughly that they became absorbed in life. But Rousseau did not merely describe reading as he and the characters of his books experienced it. He directed the reading of his readers. He showed them how to approach his books. He guided them into the texts, oriented them by his rhetoric, and made them play a certain role. Rousseau even attempted to teach his readers how to read, and through reading to touch their lives. This strategy required a break with conventional literature. Instead of hiding behind the narrative and pulling strings to manipulate the characters in the manner of Voltaire, Rousseau threw himself into his works and expected the reader to do the same. He transformed the relation between writer and reader, between reader and text. If we can form an adequate idea of this transformation, we should be able to picture the ideal reader envisaged by Rousseau and then compare that ideal with an actual person, Jean Ranson.

CONSIDER two key texts, the dual prefaces of *La Nouvelle Héloise*, where Rousseau discusses reading and the way to read his novel at some length. Both prefaces—one is a brief introduction to the book, the other is a dialogue in which Rousseau represents himself defending his work to a skeptical critic—confront an objection that could be expected from any reader of Rousseau: How could Jean-Jacques do anything as wicked as to publish a novel? The question may seem absurd today, but it fit squarely into the preoccupations of an age in which novels were seen as a moral danger, and it was especially acute in the case of Rousseau, who had won notoriety by denouncing all the arts and sciences for their effect on morals. Yet here he was, shamelessly displaying his name on the title page of the most corrupting kind of literature. This great novelist had always preached against novels. How then could he write one—especially a story about a tutor who seduces his pupil and later joins her husband in a ménage à trois?

Rousseau's reply in the prefaces is deceptively simple: "This novel is not a novel." It is a collection of letters, which Rousseau presents in the role of an editor, as the subtitle makes clear: "*Letters of two lovers living in a small town at the foot of the Alps*. Collected and published by J. J. Rousseau." But that common literary device would satisfy no one, least of all Rousseau, who was proud of his work and could not refrain from talking about it:

> Although I have only the title of an editor here, I have worked on this book myself, and I do not hide that fact. Have I done the whole thing, and is the entire correspondence a fiction? Readers from high society (*gens du monde*), what does it matter to you? For you it is certainly fiction.

Behind this *coquetterie*, Rousseau strategically shifts the question from the role played by him to the role expected of the reader. The book will seem contrived to members of the socio-cultural elite (*le monde*, an expression charged with meaning for Rousseau and other men of letters); but to those who can read it with innocent eyes, it will appear as truth itself. Where does Rousseau locate this pure variety of plain and simple truth? As far away from salon society as possible: "This book is not made to circulate in society [*le monde*] and is suitable for very few readers. . . . It will displease religious bigots, libertines, and philosophes." The ideal reader must be able to divest himself of the conventions of literature as well as the prejudices of society. Only then can he enter into the story in the manner prescribed by Rousseau:

> Whoever resolves to read these letters must arm himself with patience about the incorrectness of their language, the overblown character of their style, the ordinary quality of the ideas expressed in their inflated phrasing. He must say to himself in advance that those who wrote them are not French, not sophisticates, not academicians nor philosophes but rather provincials, foreigners, recluses, young people, almost children, who in their romantic imaginations take the innocent frenzy of their minds to be philosophy.

These distinctions have a social and political edge to them. Rousseau saw literature as an element in a power system peculiar to the Old Regime. He rejected it, all of it, belles lettres along with the beau monde, and in doing so he broke with the philosophes. Indeed, he wrote *La Nouvelle Héloise* at the same time as his *Lettre à d'Alembert sur des spectacles*, during the great crisis of 1757-58, when he severed his ties with the Encyclopedists. In his eyes, Diderot, d'Alembert, and their allies belonged to the fashionable world of theaters and salons. Philosophy itself had become a fashion, the ultimate in Parisian sophistication; and as it spread beyond Paris, it endangered the healthiest segments of the body politic. D'Alembert's article on Geneva in the *Encyclopédie* epitomized this process. By deriding the old-fashioned puritans who opposed Voltaire's project to establish a theater in their city, it showed that the cultural cancer was attacking the last bastion of virtue, Calvin's republic—and Rousseau's.

The article cut "Jean Jacques Rousseau, citizen of Geneva" to the quick, not merely because he identified with his fatherland but also because the disease that threatened it had also ravaged him. Had he not sunk deeper into depravity with every step that led away from his original innocence? Had he not attempted to break into *le monde*? And had he not used music, theater, literature, and philosophy as a means of entry? He had lived the formula he invented: culture equals corruption. So he would invent another cultural form, an antiliterary literature, in which he could defend the cause of virtue by appealing directly to the unsophisticated. Rousseau found his prophetic voice in *La Nouvelle Héloise*, but he spoke only to those who had ears to hear—which in fact meant those with eyes to read.

Rousseau did not demand that the reader try to turn himself into a Swiss peasant, but rather that he reject the dominant values of literature and society. Anyone who wanted to read the lovers' letters as they deserved to be read would have to place himself spiritually "at the foot of the Alps," where literary niceties made no sense. The letters were not written to "please" in

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Paris—*plaire* being a refinement idealized in the seventeenth century—but to give free rein to feeling.

> If you read them as the work of an author who wants to please [*plaire*], or who takes pride in his writing, they are detestable. But take them for what they are, and judge them according to their kind. Two or three young people, simple but sensitive, speak to one another about the interests of their hearts. They never think of trying to cut a fine figure in each other's eyes. They know and love each other too well for vanity to have a place in their exchanges. They are children; should they think as adults? They are foreigners; should they write correctly? They are recluses; should they be familiar with the ways of society? . . . They know nothing of such things. They know how to love; they refer everything to their passion.

The letters of Julie and Saint-Preux lack refinement, because they are genuine. They have nothing to do with literature, because they are true. Like music, they communicate pure emotion from one soul to another: "They are no longer letters; they are hymns." The religious reference is not accidental. Rousseau was reviving a way of reading that prevailed everywhere, and especially in his native Geneva, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: reading in order to absorb the unmediated Word of God. What set Rousseauistic reading apart from its religious antecedents—whether they were Calvinist, Jansenist, or pietistic—was the summons to read the most suspect form of literature, the novel, as if it were the Bible. Rousseau wrote about love, the family, everyday life as if he were a prophet of divine truth. He required those who wanted access to that truth to divest themselves of their worldly roles and to learn to read all over again as he had read with his father. In this way he would explode the conventions established at the height of the classical period by Boileau. He would revolutionize the relation between reader and text, and open the way to romanticism.

Such was the program written into Rousseau's works. How did his readers respond to it—real readers, not merely those envisioned in the text? That question brings us back to Jean Ranson.

From the beginning of his correspondence, Ranson made it clear that "l'Ami Jean-Jacques" fascinated him as much as Rousseau's writing. Ostervald was well placed to satisfy that interest, because the Swiss publisher sometimes made business trips to Paris, and sent reports of the literary gossip to his young friend in La Rochelle. Unfortunately Ostervald's side of the correspondence is missing; it probably contained some accounts of meetings with Rousseau, for Ranson kept calling for news of his "Ami" and complained when it failed to arrive. "What! You have seen l'Ami Jean-Jacques and you do not tell me all about it! I hope you have only postponed the report for another letter." Ranson was equally anxious to receive Rousseau's works. In the spring of 1777, when Ostervald was about to leave for another trip to Paris, Ranson wrote, "No doubt you will see l'Ami Jean-Jacques. Please find out from him whether we will be able to have a good edition of his works. And I beg of you especially to send me some word about his health before you return." The man and the works always went together in Ranson's letters.

RANSON also accompanied the references to Rousseau with remarks on his own life. In June 1777, when he was about to turn thirty, he wrote,

> I am sure, Monsieur, that you will be happy to hear that I am about to end my bachelorhood. I have chosen and have been accepted by a Miss Raboteau, my first cousin, the sister of the young lady whom M. Rother of Nantes married last year. . . . The happy character of this dear person combined with all my considerations of propriety makes me hope in this commitment for the most [here there is a hole in the paper]. . . .

Then he moved directly to his favorite subject:

> Although I have begged you again and again, Monsieur, to send me news about l'Ami Jean-Jacques, in whom I take the deepest interest, you are so cruel as to say nothing about him. Haven't you had a chance to see him and to benefit from a few words with him in Paris? Tell me about it at the first possible moment, I insist, if you don't want me to bear a grudge.

Ranson's association of his marriage and his "Ami" was not a coincidence. In his next letter he explained:

> I send you my warmest thanks for your good wishes concerning my new estate. My wife is as touched as I am by what you wrote to me on her account. I hope it will not be difficult for me to fulfill my duties toward this dear spouse in the fashion that you prescribe and that I have prescribed for myself. If I have been able to do without women until the age of nearly thirty, though I have certainly never looked upon the fair sex with an indifferent eye, I am sure that one will be enough for me for the rest of my life. Everything that l'Ami Jean-Jacques has written about the duties of husbands and wives, of mothers and fathers, has had a profound effect on me; and I confess to you that it will serve me as a rule in any of those estates that I should occupy.

The reference to Rousseau remained implicit in a letter that Ranson wrote a few months later. This time he was the one sending congratulations: "I congratulate you warmly, you and Monsieur and Madame Bertrand [Ostervald's son-in-law and daughter], on the happy birth of your granddaughter, which no doubt the mother will nurse herself as she has done for her other children." At the end of the year, Ranson learned that he, too, was to become a father. He prepared himself for his new responsibilities by reading: "Please procure for me, if possible, an excellent dissertation on the physical education of children published by M. Balexerde of Geneva. I am about to become a father, and am thinking of how I can best fulfill my duties." We have moved from a traditional world, where children are raised according to family lore, to the

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world of Doctor Spock, where they grow up under instructions from the printed word. Ranson sought guidance above all from Rousseau, the prophet of breast-feeding and maternal love. In May 1778 he wrote joyfully, "My wife has made me the father of a girl, who is doing beautifully and who is being nursed by her mother with the greatest success."

Soon afterward he learned that his spiritual guide had died.

> So, Monsieur, we have lost the sublime Jean-Jacques. How it pains me never to have seen nor heard him. I acquired the most extraordinary admiration for him by reading his books. If some day I should travel near Ermenonville, I shall not fail to visit his grave and perhaps to shed some tears on it. Tell me, I pray, what you think of this famous man, whose fate has always aroused the most tender feelings in me, while Voltaire often provoked my indignation. . . . He said some years ago that none of the new editions of his works were correct, but rather that all were full of falsifications, cuts, and changes, even the edition of *Rey*, which he complained about bitterly. I hope he has left behind some manuscripts that will make it possible for one to have an edition free of all those faults. If you learn anything about that, or anything else concerning Rousseau, please share it with me. You would give me the greatest pleasure.

Then, without breaking stride, comes the news of the family: "We are very touched, my wife and I, by the kind things you say about the birth of our daughter, whom the mother continues to nurse with the greatest success and without feeling the slightest discomfort."

Ranson went on to talk about Rousseau in a long string of letters. He wanted to know everything about the life and death of his "Ami." He devoured every anecdote he could get his hands on, comparing versions in the *Courier de l'Europe*, *L'Année littéraire*, the *Mercure de France*, the *Annales of Linguet*, and many other periodicals. He hung an engraving of the tomb at Ermenonville on the wall of his study. He bought eulogies, pamphlets, and even scraps of unpublished manuscripts that were attributed to Rousseau and began to circulate after his death. Ranson also collected rumors, especially those that passed through the shop of his local bookseller, Guillaume Pavie. Some said that Jean-Jacques had died from poisoning. But wasn't it probably from stomach trouble, as the *Courier de l'Europe* had claimed? Or did it come as a result of the agony produced by the disappearance of the manuscript of the *Confessions*? The Keeper of the Seals was said to have procured a copy and to have summoned Jean-Jacques to explain how it could be circulating, since he had promised never to release it. Thérèse Levasseur must have sold it behind his back. They needed money desperately at the end, when Jean-Jacques had given up copying music. But why in the world had no one come forth to save them from their misery? According to Pavie, some Parisian booksellers were already offering manuscript copies of the *Confessions* for fifteen louis. What a treasure those *Confessions* must be! Ranson burned with the desire to read them and everything else that Rousseau had left behind. He wanted to know every secret of his mentor's soul, every detail of his past, every product of his pen, down to the annotations of his music, which Ranson especially requested from the S.T.N.

The references to Rousseau continued to appear in Ranson's letters as a kind of gloss on the reports about his family. A son was to come in February 1780, another in December 1782. The Ransons named the first Jean Isaac after his maternal grandfather. They named the second Emile. That gesture represented a significant break with family tradition, for the Ransons and Raboteaus had almost always kept to a limited stock of family names—a few Jeans, Pierres, and Pauls among a profusion of the Old Testament variety favored by Protestants: Abraham, Isaac, Elie, Benjamin, Samuel, and Joachim. Little Emile was to be a living testimony to his parents' faith in Rousseau's doctrine of education, and of human nature in general.

RANSON'S approach to fatherhood explains the importance of the pedagogical and children's literature in his orders with the S.T.N. Those books represented a new attitude toward children and a new desire on the part of parents to oversee their education. A century earlier, Charles Perrault had produced his tales of Mother Goose to amuse an audience of salon sophisticates. Ranson's favorite authors, notably Mme de Genlis and Mme Leprince de Beaumont, wrote for the children themselves, and did so not merely to amuse them but to develop their virtue. The moralistic emphasis of the new children's books stands out in their titles: *Moral Playthings, or Tales for Infants* and *Readings for Children, or a Selection of Short Tales Equally Suited to Amuse Them and to Make Them Love Virtue*. These books began from the Rousseauistic premise that children were naturally good and went on to develop a pedagogy saturated with Rousseauism. In addition to them, Ranson owned at least two copies of *Emile*. The remarkable thing, however, is not that he read this or that treatise on children but that he read any treatises at all. He entered into parenthood through reading, and he relied on books in order to make his offspring into so many Emiles and Emilies.

This behavior expressed a new attitude toward the printed word. Ranson did not read in order to enjoy literature, but to cope with life, and especially family life, exactly as Rousseau intended. Seen through his letters, he and his wife appear as the perfect image of the readers to whom Jean-Jacques addressed *La Nouvelle Héloise*. "I like to imagine two spouses reading this collection together, finding in it fresh encouragement to continue with their daily work and perhaps new ways to make it useful," Rousseau wrote in the sec-

"THE ACCREDITED VICTIM population continues to expand at a rate that would appall Malthus. In an editorial on abortion ('the sad necessity,' sniff sniff), the *New York Times* remarks that 'unintended pregnancies' tend to strike 'victims of contraceptive failure, ignorance, and innocence.' Victims of innocence, forsooth! Is there anything you *can't* be a victim of? Victims of the world unite, and prosper."

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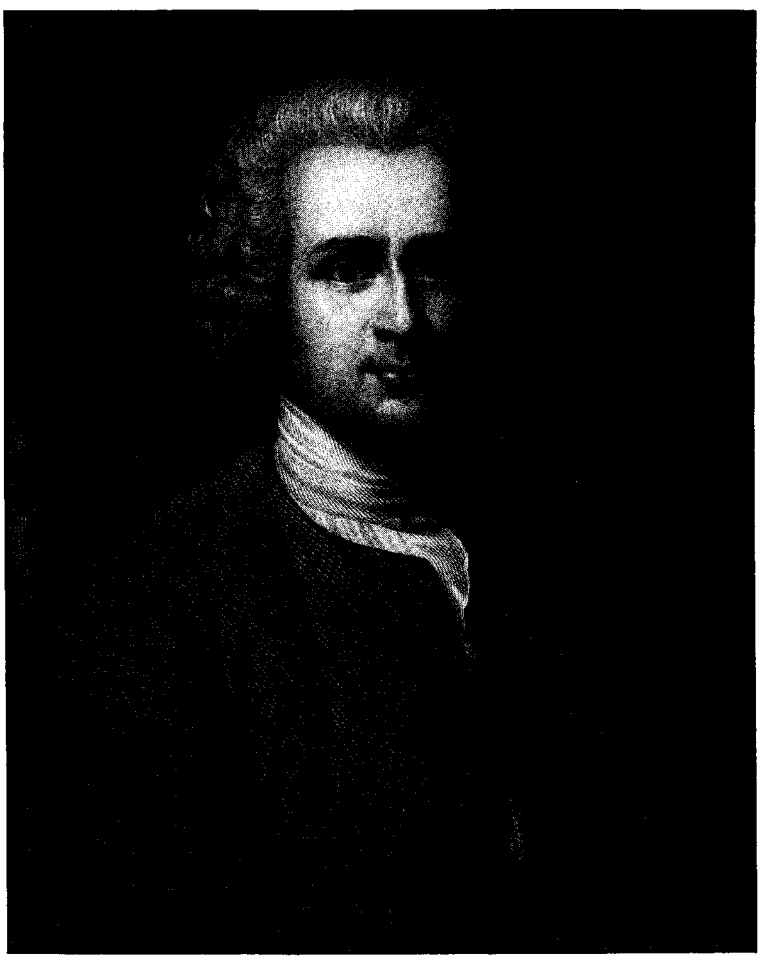
ond preface. "How could they contemplate the picture of a happy household without wanting to imitate such a sweet model?" Ranson modeled his household in just that way, by reading Rousseau as Rousseau wanted to be read. "My wife sends you her respects," he wrote to Ostervald in September 1780.

> She continues, thank God, to enjoy good health, as does her dear baby, who is doing very well on his mommy's milk. His older sister, a big girl of thirty months, now shows its influence by the best of temperaments. Virtuous Jean-Jacques! It is to thee that I owe this tender obligation.

The rest of the letters in the dossier have the same tone—earnest, intimate, sentimental, and moralistic—the tone set by Rousseau for readers everywhere, however much they differed in their circumstances. Nothing could be more ordinary, perhaps, but the significance of Ranson's letters consists in their ordinariness. They show Rousseauism penetrating into the everyday world of an unexceptional bourgeois and helping him make sense of the things that mattered most in his existence: love, marriage, parenthood, the big events of a little life and the stuff that life was made of everywhere in France.

Ranson's way of reading is unthinkable today, and *La Nouvelle Héloise* is almost unreadable—if not for everyone, at least for a great many "ordinary" readers of the modern variety, who cannot wade through six volumes of sentiment unrelieved by any episodes of violence, explicit sex, or anything much in the way of plot. The sentiment overwhelmed Rousseau's readers in the eighteenth century—thousands of them, not merely Jean Ranson. By studying their responses, we can put his case in perspective and get a broader view of the gap that separates the readers of the Old Regime from the readers of today.



ENGRAVING OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Although we have very few statistics on book sales under the Old Regime, it is probable that *La Nouvelle Héloise* was the biggest best-seller of the century. The demand for copies outran the supply so badly that booksellers rented it out by the day and even by the hour, charging twelve sous for sixty minutes with one volume, according to L.-S. Mercier. At least seventy editions were published before 1800—probably more than for any other novel in the previous history of publishing. True, the most sophisticated men of letters, sticklers for correctness like Voltaire and Grimm, found the style overblown and the subject distasteful. But ordinary readers from all ranks of society were swept off their feet. They wept, they suffocated, they raved, they looked deep into their lives and resolved to live better, then they poured their hearts out in more tears—and in letters to Rousseau, who collected their testimonials in a huge bundle which has survived for the inspection of posterity.

In going through Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloise* mail, one is everywhere struck by the sound of sobbing: "tears," and "sighs," and "torment" from the young publisher C.-J. Panckoucke; "delicious tears" from the Genevan J.-L. Buisson; "tears" and "delicious outpourings of the heart" from A.-J. Loyseau de Mauléon; "such delicious tears" from Charlotte Bourette of Paris that the mere thought of them set her to weeping more; so many "sweet tears" for J.-J.-P. Fromaget that "at every page my soul melted." The abbé Cahagne read the same passages aloud to friends at least ten times, each time with bursts of tears all around: "One must suffocate, one must abandon the book, one must weep, one must write to you that one is choking with emotion and weeping." The novel drove J.-F. Bastide to his bed and nearly drove him mad, or so he believed. It produced the opposite effect on Daniel Roguin, who sobbed so violently that he cured himself of a severe cold. The baron de La Sarraz declared that the only way to read the book was behind locked doors, so that one could weep at one's ease, without being interrupted by the servants. J.-V. Capperonnier de Gauffecourt read only a few pages at a time, because his health was too weak to withstand the emotion. But his friend, the abbé Jacques Pernetti, congratulated himself on being robust enough to get through all six volumes without stopping, despite the pounding of his heart. The Marquise de Polignac made it to Julie's deathbed scene in volume six but then broke down:

> I dare not tell you the effect it made on me. No, I was past weeping. A sharp pain convulsed me. My heart was crushed. Julie dying was no longer an unknown person. I believed I was her sister, her friend, her Claire. My seizure became so strong that if I had not put the book away I would have been as ill as all those who attended that virtuous woman in her last moments.

Lower down on the social scale, Charlotte de La Taille cried her heart

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out at the death of Julie and did not regain her composure for eight days. Sensing that the end was near for the heroine, Louis François, a retired army officer, found it impossible to continue, though he had wept his way without a halt through the earlier volumes:

> You have driven me crazy about her. Imagine then the tears that her death must have wrung from me. Can you believe it? I spent three days without daring to read the last letter, from M. de Wolmar to Saint-Preux. I knew how gripping every detail of it would be. But I could not bear the idea of Julie dead or dying. Still, I finally had to overcome my aversion. Never have I wept such delicious tears. That reading created such a powerful effect on me that I believe I would have gladly died during that supreme moment.

La Nouvelle Héloise did not produce the first epidemic of emotion in the history of literature. Richardson had already set off waves of sobbing in England, and Lessing had done the same in Germany. Rousseau differed from them in that he inspired his readers with an overwhelming desire to make contact with the lives behind the printed page—the lives of his characters and his own. They wrote letters to him, therefore, and his own correspondence became the logical extension of his epistolary novel. "It seems to me that one cannot exchange thoughts with you without being filled with your spirit," wrote Louis François. ". . . I have hardly lived as virtuously as Julie, but the soul of Saint-Preux had passed completely into mine." The same impulse overcame Paul-Claude Moultou:

> No, Monsieur, I can no longer keep quiet. You have overwhelmed my soul. It is full to bursting, and it must share its torment with you. . . . Oh Julie! Oh Saint-Preux! Oh Claire! Oh Edouard! What planet do your souls inhabit, and how can I unite mine with yours? They are the offspring of your heart, Monsieur; your *mind* alone could not have made them as they are. Open that heart to me so that I can contemplate the living models of characters whose virtues made me weep such sweet tears.

OF COURSE one must make allowances for the hypersensitive style of the time, but many of the letters have a ring of authenticity. In trying to make contact with Rousseau by letter, his readers were driven by a need to confess to him just as they took him to be confessing to them—indirectly in the letters of *La Nouvelle Héloise* before the open baring of the soul that was to come in the *Confessions*. They wanted to tell him how they identified with his characters, how they, too, had loved, sinned, suffered, and resolved to be virtuous again in the midst of a wicked and uncomprehending world. They knew his novel was true, because they had read its message in their lives. "There is not a description, not a sentiment, not a reflection, not a principle in your book that does not correspond to my unhappy lot," wrote A.-J. Loyseau de Mauléon. An unhappy housewife, Constant de Rebecque, explained that the novel had saved her marriage. She was now able to love her husband by picturing him as Saint-Preux and herself as Julie. And J.-L. Le Cointe saw his whole family in a new light:

> Sincerely committed to a young wife, I have learned from you, and she has, too, that what had seemed to us to be a mere attachment based on the habit of living together is in fact a most tender love. At the age of twenty-eight, I am a father of four children, and I will follow your lessons in order to form them into men—not the kind of men you see everywhere around you, but the kind that we see in you alone.

It would be wrong to dismiss such effusions as fan mail—although the very idea of a writer receiving mail from unknown admirers was a significant novelty, part of the new cult of the writer that Rousseau was helping to create. Naive and sentimental as the letters may seem today, they testify to the effectiveness of Rousseau's rhetoric two hundred years ago. His "fans" read him in the way that he asked to be read and threw themselves into the role called for in the prefaces, which they sometimes quoted in their letters. One correspondent made the point explicit: "Your book produced in me the effects that you had foreseen in your preface."

So the flood of tears unloosed by *La Nouvelle Héloise* in 1761 should not be considered as just another wave of pre-Romantic sentimentality. It was a response to a new rhetorical situation. Reader and writer communed across the printed page, each of them assuming the ideal form envisioned in the text. Jean-Jacques opened up his soul to those who could read him right, and his readers felt their own souls elevated above the imperfections of their ordinary existence. Having made contact with "l'Ami Jean-Jacques," they felt capable of repossessing their lives, as spouses, parents, and citizens, exactly as Ranson was to do a few years later, when he began to read Rousseau.

JEAN RANSON was not, therefore, an aberration. The letters that he sent to Ostervald from 1774 to 1785 show the same kind of response that one can find spread out horizontally, so to speak, in the letters received by Rousseau in 1761. The two dimensions complement each other and suggest that Rousseauistic reading was an important phenomenon in prerevolutionary France. Of course, one cannot measure its importance statistically. Yet one can hold it up against the main hypothesis in the newly emerging field of the history of reading: namely, that a "reading revolution" took place in Europe toward the end of the eighteenth century.

As developed by Rolf Engelsing and other German scholars, this notion divides the development of reading into two phases. From the Renaissance until approximately 1750, Europeans read "intensively." They had access to very few books—the Bible, devotional works, an occasional chapbook or an almanac—and they read them over and over again, meditating on them inwardly or sharing them aloud with others in family and social gatherings (the *Spinnstube* and *veillée*). In the second half of the eighteenth century, educated people began to read "extensively." They ran through a great deal of printed matter, especially novels and journals, the favorite genres in the reading clubs (*Lesegesellschaften, cabinets littéraires*) that proliferated everywhere in urban centers. And they read each item only once—for amusement—then raced on to the next.

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The distinction between intensive and extensive reading may serve as a way to contrast the behavior of readers five centuries ago with that of readers today. But does it help one to locate a turning point in the later eighteenth century? Not if Ranson's case has any typicality. True, Ranson read a great many novels and journals, and he sometimes read them with friends, in a way that bears some resemblance to the sociability of the German reading clubs. But his interest in contemporary novels did not mean that he neglected the classics, or that he read the great figures of French literature rapidly and only once. He wrote that he liked Mercier and the *Tableau de Paris*, "but I cannot forgive him for what he says about Racine, a divine poet, whom I never reread without discovering new charms." One could hardly find a more intensive reader than Ranson, and his reading became more intense as he did more of it. If anything, it illustrates a "reading revolution" in reverse.

That Ranson's way of reading did not run counter to the main trend of his time can be appreciated by the German counterpart of Viard's French textbook: *Die Kunst Bücher zu Lesen* (Jena, 1799), a manual on reading by Johann Adam Bergk, which should be the embodiment of a revolution in reading, if there were one. Instead of dwelling on problems of pronunciation in the manner of Viard, Bergk propounded a full-blown "art of reading." He began with advice on how to approach books physically. You should never read while standing or after having finished a meal. Instead, you should wash your face with cold water and take your book outdoors, where you can read it in the bosom of nature—and aloud, for the sound of the voice facilitates the penetration of ideas. Most important, you should have the right spiritual disposition. Instead of responding passively to the text, you should throw yourself into it, seize its meaning, and apply it to your own life. "We must relate everything we read to our 'I,' reflect on everything from a personal point of view, and never lose sight of the consideration that study makes us freer and more independent, and that it should help us find an outlet for the expression of our heart and mind." Bergk attributed this conception of reading to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He devoted a crucial chapter to Rousseau and cited on his title page the very lines from *La Nouvelle Héloise* that meant so much to readers like Ranson: "To read little and to meditate a great deal upon our reading, or to talk it over extensively between ourselves, that is the way thoroughly to digest it." This notion is quite compatible with Viard's textbook, which treated reading as a moral preparation for living. In fact, the reading that was expounded in the textbooks, expected by Rousseau, and experienced by Ranson was essentially the same; but it was not the "extensive" reading of Engelsing's revolution.

It seems to me, in short, that no such revolution took place. But something happened to the way that readers responded to texts in the late eighteenth century. How many readers? How many texts? The quantitative questions will not admit of answers. Still, I think that there are general implications to the case of Jean Ranson. I find him exemplary not because he conforms to any statistical pattern, but because he was exactly the "other" addressed in Rousseau's writing. He embodied both the ideal reader envisioned in the text and the real reader who bought the books. And the way he brought those roles together demonstrated the effectiveness of Rousseauistic rhetoric. By stamping his vision of the world on Ranson's daily life, Rousseau showed how he could touch lives everywhere. And by absorbing the texts as Rousseau taught him, Ranson testified to a new relationship between the reader and the printed word. Writer and reader together realized a transformation in a mode of communication that went far beyond literature and that would leave its mark on several generations of revolutionaries and romantics.

VIVE KL'EMPEREUR!

Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times Volume I: 1885-1933 by Peter Heyworth

(Cambridge University Press, 488 pp., $34.50)

Interpreters of music are not the most promising subjects for biographies, the intrinsic experience of their performances, and the underlying meaning of the life, being difficult to convey in words. Nor do studio recordings preserve it, particularly in a discography as old as Otto Klemperer's, where the technological barriers are considerable. Sustaining reader interest throughout the chronicle of a conductor's concert and opera appearances, therefore, is no small achievement. But Peter Heyworth does this, and much more, supremely well. Those who have never heard Klemperer, or even of him, will enjoy and be enlightened by this book. American music-lovers are less aware than their British and European counterparts that Klemperer is one of the handful of great conductors. Unfortunately, his stints with the New York Philharmonic in the 1920s were overshadowed by those of Furtwängler, not to mention Toscanini; with the exception of the years in Los Angeles, which are discussed in Heyworth's second volume, Klemperer's career did not unfold in the United States.

Exhaustively researched and elegantly written—Mr. Heyworth sets new standards in readable music scholarship—the biography examines every issue with clarity and fairness. The portrait that emerges from the combination of the author's personal knowledge and insights, and his skillful piecing together of excerpts from the letters, critical notices, documents, and reminiscences, is one of a man of great moral and artistic stature. And this is a view which must be established at the outset, since Klemperer's life was one of almost continuous scandal.

In addition to the story of the development of Klemperer the musician, the book can be read both as a case history of a manic-depressive and a study of the Weimar Republic, from the first encroachment of National Socialism to eventual strangulation by it. Just as cyclothymia controlled Klemperer's temperament and behavior, so the political and economic circumstances of the Wei-

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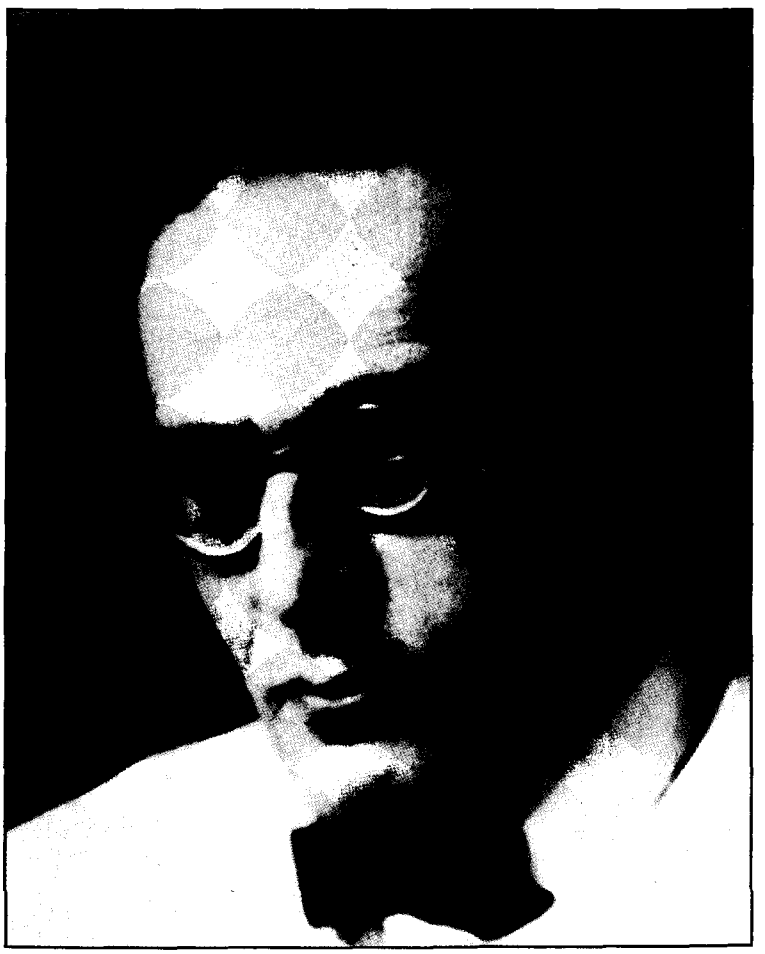
mar government determined the outward course of the conductor's professional life until 1933.

The effects of the most intense of Klemperer's manic and depressive phases were devastating, both to himself and to those around him. His notorious elopement with the soprano Elisabeth Schumann, for only one example, disgraced and nearly ruined both their lives, as well as her husband's. Like Jekyll and Hyde, in his depressed state Klemperer would reverse the decisions, undo the undertakings, and atone for or forget about the infatuations that had impelled him during his euphorias. When the pendulum was at one extreme, he composed music and arranged for its performance and publication; when at the other, he lost confidence in his creative efforts, withdrew, and even destroyed the manuscripts.

His colleagues, as well as the theater directors, impresarios, and concert agents with whom he dealt, were of course aware of his instabilities—more so of the "highs," the violent moods and aggressiveness, than of the "lows," with the attendant self-destructiveness. Yet no one seems to have realized that Klemperer's condition was pathological. That a conductor with a reputation for terrorizing orchestra players, insulting singers, quarreling with any and everybody, was nevertheless sought after by opera companies and concert organizations and venerated by his musicians and audiences, says much for the powers of his music-making.

Mr. Heyworth never strays from the perspective of Klemperer's illness, nor does he evade its most unattractive manifestations. Not surprisingly, the conductor's personality embodied opposites on other levels as well. According to one collaborator, he was witty but quite without humor, "cynical and sarcastic" yet also "naive and child-like." He had "the driving power of a maniac," but was "a plaything in the hands of a bureaucrat"; and he "combined sharp powers of understanding with the stubborn ignorance of someone who was unteachable." Other sources reveal that he was imperious, demanding, and dogmatic (as a conductor must be in front of an orchestra), and far from conventionally polite; as one of his employers expressed it, "He had the mannerlessness of genius."



PHOTOGRAPH OF OTTO KLEMPERER, 1929

Moreover, Klemperer was a physical giant (he literally dwarfs Arnold Schoenberg in one of the book's photographs of them together), which doubtless made the worst of these characteristics still more frightening. In any case, his rehearsals were unhappily tense and often marred by explosive incidents.

As a conductor, he could be finicky beyond the point of profitable returns, expose individual players to ridicule, and even discharge violinists who failed to bow with the rest of the section—actions that today would have resulted in his suspension and made him the respondent in law suits. While in Russia in the 1920s, lacking the language in which to vent his fury at the failure of an instrumentalist to appear, "Klemperer threw down his baton, leapt into the stalls, and hurled the fur coat he had acquired for the journey to the ground." The epithet occurring most frequently in the narrative of the biography is "an alarming figure." But Klemperer could also move and even inspire his orchestras and audiences.

Mr. Heyworth's presentation of the life is strictly chronological: childhood, student years in Berlin, apprenticeship in Prague, a succession of posts in Hamburg (from which the affair with Elisabeth Schumann forced him to resign), Strasbourg, Cologne, Wiesbaden, and finally, the Kroll Opera in Berlin. This last occupies the largest and most absorbing part of the book, but the Strasbourg chapter is the most entertaining. Although the front was close by, the Alsatian city's musical life remained almost as active during the war (World War I) as before. When Klemperer arrived at the Strasbourg Opera, its director was his former teacher, the cantankerous and super-conservative Hans Pfitzner. At least one anecdote from Mr. Heyworth's vignettes of both men is worth repeating:

> On one occasion when Pfitzner was conducting *Die Meistersinger* and the Beckmesser became hoarse, he handed over his baton to a deputy, had himself shaved, and sang the role in the third act "with exemplary articulation and accuracy."

A glimpse of Klemperer in (of course) a manic state comes from a performance of *Tannhäuser*, which he:

> conducted with his feet on the desk before him, so that the singers were confronted by the soles of his inordinately large shoes. He also shouted and beat time so noisily that the *Freie Presse* dryly asked whether he supposed himself to be without an audience.

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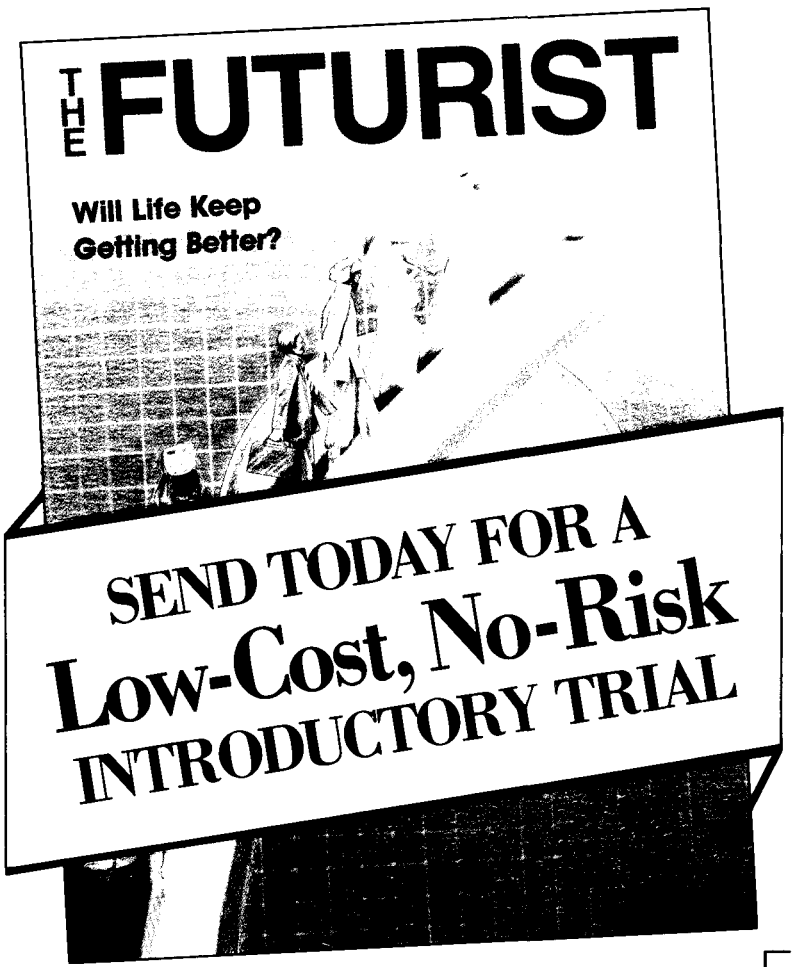

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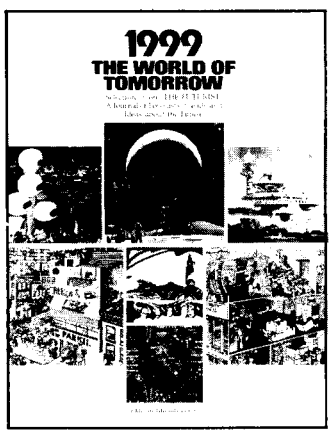

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Klemperer's Berlin, in Mr. Heyworth's assessment, was a far greater musical metropolis than either Paris or Vienna. In the late 1920s, Berlin supported three major opera houses, offering new as well as familiar works in astonishing abundance. There, more than fifty years ago, audiences at the Kroll heard Schoenberg's *Erwartung* and Janácek's *From the House of the Dead*, to name only two twentieth-century masterpieces not yet mounted on a professional stage in The Big Apple. Concert life was equally full and diverse, with orchestras, chamber music organizations, choruses, recitalists, and early music ensembles. "Perhaps no city has ever enjoyed such a rich orchestral life as Berlin during the years of the Weimar Republic," Mr. Heyworth writes. Considering that Furtwängler was the conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, and that Klemperer was directing orchestra programs as well as operas at the Kroll, who can dispute it?

The other essential criteria for the measurement of a musical culture are the quality of its criticism and its audiences. To judge by Mr. Heyworth's copious quotations from the press, the criticism was not only intelligent and well informed, but also attained a respectable degree of literacy. The musicologist Alfred Einstein (author of *The Italian Madrigal* and *Mozart*) was one of the regular reviewers, along with Theodor Adorno, whose notices, written from another side of the political and musical aisle, were mercifully free of the anfractuosities of his later writings. The audiences were discriminating, too, being comprised of every stratum of society. Some of them glittered, for example the one on October 11, 1928, when Klemperer presented *Histoire du Soldat* to a hall that included Albert Einstein (Alfred's cousin), Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, and, well, Cardinal Pacelli (later Pius XII). Admittedly, a few days later an audience of workers received the same piece with eleven minutes of hissing and protest. Where else, however, would "lower-income" groups have had the opportunity to experience theater of this caliber? No matter how short-lived, the Weimar government's success in sponsoring the performing arts without lowering standards is exemplary.

Most new music in the Berlin of the 1920s was aligned with one or the other of two ideologies, *die neue Sachlichkeit* (the new objectivity) and German Expressionism, the former personified by Stravinsky and Hindemith, the latter by Schoenberg, himself a Berlin resident during the last years of Klemperer's tenure there. Incidentally, Mr. Heyworth's explorations contribute substantially to the lore of these composers, but especially to that of Stravinsky, who, for instance, was observed at a late party after the premiere of his *Oedipus Rex* at the Kroll (1928) "dancing a minuet with Ernst Bloch." (A few years earlier, before the Russian and the German had become friends, Klemperer's approach to Stra-

Among The *Ningyo*

(*ningyo*: a doll; literally, "human form")

It is the third of March,
and in houses shut against the sun—
the windows tinted, barred, the gardens
cloistered deep within
a courtyard, or behind high walls,
meant to be looked on rather than
stepped out to—on thin, constricted streets
like this, throughout Japan,

today's the *Hina Matsuri*,
the Girls' Doll Festival. On shelves
wherever they've been found a space,
an Emperor and Empress
this week have been presiding
(feet tucked under hips, a fan
in hand) like hosts, but in a drowse,
their eyes narrow isles of bliss.

Her eyebrows, plucked, then newly-drawn
like falsetto notes just shy
of the hairline, are her only
indication of surprise
at having again been resurrected
from the Heian Era of a thousand
years ago and more—
days when people were upholstered

masses of padded silk, and ladies
wore twelve kimono at once.
Each hem sewn shorter than the one
beneath, her figured robes balloon
like slips too gorgeous not to show;
on her head a chandelier
of a crown confirms the sense
she's herself a kind of furniture.

Yes . . . she'd be soft enough to sleep on,
she and her thickly-bundled husband
(as petite as she, but in a hat
like a snake's tongue, or a flame
leaping up to claim supremacy),
if it weren't that everything
has been perfectly arranged already,
the quilted layers of *futon*

(folded again and again, until
they're nearly two inches high)
set out atop the lacquered chests
within which, one believes,
more bedding yet is stored, enough
for everybody. It's like "The Twelve
Days of Christmas," with all
these courtiers on step-like shelves

(three maids a-serving, five
ministers a-bowing) and all
the accoutrements of luxury
(the gilded flutes, the tea-bowls fine
as eggshells, even an ox-drawn cart
with wheels of pounded damascene)
arrayed below like ornaments
on a branching, laden pine.

It's this expansiveness
they breathe, the unthinking, vast expense
of space that is their greatest wealth—
the way their lives lie open
as scenes from the *Tale of Genji* scrolls,
where women folded behind screens
are mercifully exposed to light,
overseen as in a doll's

house whose roof's been lifted off.
Yet tomorrow, and on other mornings
soon, the looming, sorry clouds
of real girls' hands will reach
to dismantle like a Christmas tree
the fabulous display
they can't again have such room for
until this time next March.

Mary Jo Salter

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vinsky's *Piano Concerto* struck the composer as unduly romantic, whereupon he called out: "No! No! Think of Savonarola.")

Mr. Heyworth's argument that Klemperer had firm footholds on both sides of this Berlin musical wall seems slightly tendentious, though the conductor himself, during a visit to the Soviet Union, had declared:

> I categorically reject the idea of an opposition between Schoenberg and Stravinsky. Both are geniuses, although representatives of different races. The difference between them lies more in the fact that they belong to different generations than in any explicit tendency of the one or the other.

Mr. Heyworth asserts that Universal Edition, the Viennese publisher of predominantly Expressionist music, "had on its books most of the outstanding composers of the first half of the twentieth century." Still, no matter how formidable the array of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Bartók, Janácek, and Szymanowski, it is not more so than that of Debussy, Richard Strauss, Ravel, Stravinsky, Varèse, and Prokofiev, who are missing. And in any case, Klemperer's performance tally of Universal Edition composers is poor. He conducted nothing by Berg, only one work by Webern, and by Schoenberg merely a single performance of *Pierrot* and not more than two or three of the *Begleitmusik*, *Die glückliche Hand*, *Pelleas*, *Verklärte Nacht*, and the Bach arrangements. Klemperer would not play music that he did not understand, a description that seems to have included most of the atonal kind.

This record contrasts with the conductor's eagerness to program anything by Hindemith, directly from the factory. "Klemperer was to be one of Hindemith's most powerful champions," Mr. Heyworth states, and with the facts to support him, though that composer's pieces performed by Klemperer are too numerous to list here.

Notwithstanding this, Stravinsky was incomparably the more important composer in Klemperer's life. *Oedipus Rex* was arguably his and the Kroll Opera's greatest success. He repeatedly conducted *Pulcinella*, *Les Noces*, *Apollo*, *Les Baiser de la fée*, *Capriccio*, the *Symphony of Psalms*, and the *Symphony in Three Movements*. And the two men were lifelong friends. When the Kroll was about to be closed, they appeared on stage together after a performance of the *Soldat* and "were greeted by storms of applause." Three days later, in a newspaper interview, Stravinsky thanked Klemperer and the Kroll for the presentation of "almost my entire output." A day or so after that, Stravinsky "joined Thomas Mann, Weill, Hindemith, and others in an appeal for the preservation of the Kroll," which, as Mann wrote, "occupies a strong position on the intellectual left, because it stands at the crossroads of social and cultural interests and is a thorn in the eye of obscurantism. . . ." He might have said National Socialism, which had recently been directing anti-Semitic abuse not only at Klemperer ("a Jew unable to enter Beethoven's world of feeling") but also at Stravinsky, to whom the *Deutsche Zeitung* referred as "Isadore—sorry, Igor—Stravinsky."

Klemperer was among the first to perform Bach with old instruments and with one instrument on a part, though he stopped short of adding ornamentation and introducing rhythmic alteration. The present reviewer was fortunate enough to hear him conduct the Brandenburg Concertos in 1950 in Los Angeles (with the violino piccolo played by Adolf Koldofsky). I clearly remember the conductor's curt bow after entering the stage, his angry glare at the audience, his long wait before starting, and, at the conclusion of the Fifth Concerto, his refusal to shake hands with his harpsichord soloist (Alice Ehlers). Some of his tempos were erratic, but unlike today's more musicologically sophisticated conductors, who manage to make music that was new in its own time sound artificially archaic, Klemperer's Bach was always vital.

At a celebratory banquet for Klemperer in Berlin, shortly before the National Socialist shutdown, Artur Schnabel toasted his friend:

> [An artist is confronted] by questions, not of personal advantage and security, but of truthfulness at any price, even at the price of lifelong insecurity. . . . [Artists like] Klemperer are at once conservative, liberal *and* revolutionary; they are aristocrats and anarchists; they are for freedom and for discipline. Again like Klemperer, they have an inner independence that obliges them simultaneously to do justice both to what is timeless and to what is of their own time.

ROBERT CRAFT

Robert Craft's *Present Perspectives* will be published by Knopf in April.

IN BLACK AND WHITE

Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, Vol. 1: New Babylon, Vol. 2: New Nineveh
by Charles van Onselen

(Longman, 288 pp. each, $29.95, $9.95 paper)

Few areas of the world have telescoped so much change into a relatively short period as the region of South Africa known as the Witwatersrand. It was a quiet part of the pastoral Afrikaner republic of the Transvaal when gold was discovered there in 1886. Less than three decades later, when World War I broke out in Europe, it was a highly developed urban-industrial complex, dominated by the great city of Johannesburg and featuring the world's largest and most productive gold mines. In the meantime, it had experienced economic upheaval, war, and radical changes of government. Control of its riches was the main prize in the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902, and British victory was followed by the imposition of direct imperial rule. The subsequent granting of local self-government, first to the Transvaal and then to the new Union of South Africa, quickly put the region and its black majority under a new white settler regime, this one more susceptible than the old Afrikan republic to being manipulated and controlled by the mining industry.

The political and military side of the Witwatersrand story has often been told. Detailed studies of the rise of the gold industry have also appeared,

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providing much information on how the mineowners operated, especially how they recruited, controlled, and exploited a migratory African labor force. But up to now we have known relatively little about how the Rand's resident working people—black and white—responded to the massive economic changes that occurred. In this superb work of social history, Charles van Onselen probes the experience of marginal occupational groups that struggled to find a niche in the new order. Abstractly considered, his findings bear out the Marxist view that industrial capitalism leads irresistibly to the proletarianization of the masses. But this is not one of those exercises in historical materialism that is so theory-bound that it misses the "booming, buzzing confusion" of reality. Van Onselen's great gift is his feel for the rich diversity of group experiences. Impersonal forces were indeed operating—but on real people, who responded in a variety of inventive and resourceful ways to the efforts of those in power to make them play prescribed roles in the emerging capitalist economy.

The book is organized in a way that may daunt some readers. It begins with a terse introductory chapter that provides a schematic overview of the subject matter to be covered. This is followed by a series of long topical chapters, each of which describes in detail a special aspect of Witwatersrand social history, usually the struggles of a single occupational group. Van Onselen is a master of the historiographical equivalent of the novella, the monographic study that is too long to be an article and too short to be a book. (For reasons that apparently have more to do with the economics of publishing than with the logic of van Onselen's presentation, the eight chapters have been split into two volumes.) Each of the separate "studies" is self-sufficient and could be read with profit in isolation from the others. But taken together they provide a rich mosaic; the parts easily fit into a larger whole without losing their distinctive and personalized character.

THE INDIVIDUAL studies are concerned with the liquor dealers who provided "rotgut" to white and black miners; pimps, prostitutes, and their clients; cabbies fighting to hold their own against the rise of modernized transport systems; domestic servants of both races; Zulu washermen engaged in a losing battle against steam laundries; poor Afrikaners resisting proletarianization; and Africans who expressed their discontent by joining secret criminal societies.

The underlying argument, as set forth in the introduction and illustrated in the subsequent chapters, reflects a familiar theme of much contemporary social history. The juggernaut of industrial capitalism transforms peasants into proletarians—but not before the intended victims have resisted strenuously and caused a lot of trouble. But some special features of the South African case are brought into sharper focus. A peculiarity of the working class on the Witwatersrand in the 1890s was that it was overwhelmingly composed of single men. As a result, drinking and whoring took on exceptional significance. Van Onselen brilliantly describes the dilemma that this situation posed for the ruling classes. Should they tolerate drunkenness and prostitution as an outlet for working class discontent? Or should they suppress these social evils as a way of establishing order and improving industrial efficiency? The eventual triumph of the latter policy resulted from a combination of demographic and ideological change. White workers increasingly married and lived in family units, and bourgeois reformers committed to social stabilization gained the upper hand in public policy.

The other peculiarity of South African modernization was of course the special role of race or race consciousness. As a proponent of "historical materialism," van Onselen does not accord much direct causal significance to racial or ethnic chauvinism. He does describe the periodic "black peril" scares that swept through the white population when there were rumors of sexual intimacy across the color line, and he notes that most lower-class Afrikaners ended up as Nationalists rather than supporters of a socialist labor movement. But for the most part he attributes social behavior to class position and economic interest. In doing so he is often quite persuasive. Yet his account of how various subgroups of the working class responded to industrialization reveals clearly that a sense of racial distance and hierarchy made it difficult for whites and blacks to make common cause against the "Randlords" even when their interests were similar. There was no apparent economic reason, for example, why white and nonwhite cabbies did not form a common association. Because he fails to analyze the nature and function of racism, van Onselen deals only inferentially with a major issue in South African social history—the precise relationship between class in the Marxian sense and the workings of a racial caste system that in many respects predated the Industrial Revolution.

He does, however, provide a valuable insight into the origins of spatial or residential segregation policies. Faced with a profusion of assertive and disorderly social groups that were constantly threatening to get out of hand, govern-

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mental authorities committed to capitalist development and public order hit upon the device of putting physical distance between the various unruly elements. Small self-employed entrepreneurs, such as Zulu washermen and Afrikaner brickmakers, were ordered to move their operations to more distant locations, with the result that their competitive position (as well as their ability to protest such treatment) was undermined. Prostitution and drinking were not only restricted but also localized at some distance from working-class communities. The general effect of systematically dividing urban space for reasons of health, security, and economic efficiency was similar to that of zoning in American cities; it helped to protect the affluent from proximity to the poor and at the same time accentuated cultural cleavages among working people by encouraging or requiring their separation into racial or ethnic enclaves.

IF I READ him correctly, van Onselen is suggesting that segregation originated as a form of social control that had a broader aim than simply the perpetuation of racial dominance. It was, one might even say, the essential urban strategy of industrial capitalism.

Readers who are not vitally interested in such issues will find other reasons to appreciate van Onselen's scholarship. His work has a rich narrative quality that will appeal to those who enjoy colorful detail and dramatic incidents. Van Onselen is that rare phenomenon—a social historian who can combine the structural and statistical analysis of a community with vivid storytelling. Employing many of the skills of a first-rate investigative reporter, he gets to the bottom of a number of intrigues or conspiracies that illuminate various aspects of the socio-economic struggle for existence on the Witwatersrand. There is, for example, his fascinating account of how European liquor interests managed to flood the southern African market with cheap and often poisonous "rotgut." Of particular interest to Americans will be his description of how Russian-Jewish gangsters from New York, fleeing from a crackdown on vice in Gotham during the 1890s, moved their operations to Johannesburg and gained control of prostitution and the illicit liquor business. But the most significant of van Onselen's "inside stories" concern secret societies of Africans—the servant conspiracy known as Amalaita and the Ninevites, a prison-based brotherhood with elaborate rituals and tight discipline. These organizations were responsible for a number of brutal crimes, many of them against fellow Africans. But van Onselen also makes us aware of the brutal circumstances that encouraged such behavior. In his chapter on the Ninevites, he supplements his narrative of their rise and fall with some incisive reflections on the narrow line dividing criminality from social protest.

This, then, is social history of an exceptionally high quality. It deserves to be widely read, even by people who have never felt much interest in South African history. It is one of the most successful examples to date of how to write "history from the bottom up" without forgetting that power generally flows from the top down.

GEORGE M. FREDRICKSON

George M. Fredrickson, professor of history at Northwestern University, is the author most recently of *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (Oxford University Press).

BRIEF REVIEW

O, How the Wheel Becomes It!
by Anthony Powell

(Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 136 pp., $13.95)

We're not inclined to be pleased, W. H. Auden once remarked, if the grocer down the street writes a critically acclaimed book of poetry. That's the sort of comic reversal Anthony Powell enjoys, and the basis for this brief spoof of the vanities of literary life, his first fiction since completing the twelve-volume series *A Dance to the Music of Time* in 1975. The turnings of *The Wheel* send G. F. H. Shadbold, an aging minor man of letters, into a feverish and finally terminal pique as literary celebrity descends on his old schoolmate, the unremarkable Cedric Winterwade.

The old schoolmate touch is characteristic of Powell, who envisions no escape from the web of human attachments. In *The Music of Time*, characters encountered at earlier stages of life and in earlier volumes periodically and unexpectedly reappear, revealing unsuspected dimensions of personality: the butt of the class turns out to be the commanding officer, the legendary womanizer marries the impeccable sister-in-law. As narrator Nick Jenkins observes, "One passes through the world knowing few, if any, of the important things about even the people with whom one has been from time to time in the closest intimacy." Experience may be, as certain modernist novels suggest, filtered through the consciousness of the isolated ego, but Powell likes to emphasize the unsettling and unavoidable ways in which those other isolated egos call attention to themselves. That we live by private fictions, to use the modish term, is for Powell not an invitation to further explorations of subjectivity. Instead, he takes it as a generalizable aspect of common experi-

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ence, the usual condition of the constant human comedy.

Winterwade manages to call attention to himself from the grave. His journal record of the 1920s is discovered and a publisher asks Shadbold to take a look. Sheer endurance as a literary commodity has made Shadbold, "insofar as the phrase can be used without irony," a "respected literary voice." Remembering Winterwade as a stolid stockbroker who somehow once published a forgettable novel, Shadbold is naturally irritated to learn that Winterwade was a brilliant diarist. Even more distressing is the account of the clandestine weekend Winterwade enjoyed with the same woman Shadbold had pursued unsuccessfully in those days. Fifty years is no buffer against assaults on vanity. He quashes publication, "freely rejecting any prestige he might himself have secured in appearing as virtual discoverer of the Diary, annotating its obscurities with exact knowledge as undisputed authority on Winterwade's early years." This move backfires when the siren of the 1920s appears at his door and monopolizes a television interview by reminiscing about Winterwade, while Shadbold fumbles defensively, unwilling to reveal knowledge of the diary he suppressed. Meanwhile, his wife's ex-husband is engineering the academic reappraisal of Winterwade's novel ("however in many respects banal and derivative . . . unexpected culture-codes and utterance-types are to be seen"). Shadbold succumbs after learning that the troublesome diary has been destroyed, denying him the chance of cashing in on the Winterwade revival.

The constancy of vanity, the relentlessness of self-promotion: these are familiar themes of Powell's, but treated here in a much more casual and breezy fashion than usual. The farce never turns grim, and the egotism is never grotesque. This is harmless folly, with nothing at stake but literary reputations that are meaningless anyway. Even Powell's deadpan voice lacks bite, it's so gently and effortlessly pitched. Indeed, his chief comic device (as he lets on) is mouthing the clichés of the literary marketplace with only the slightest trace of irony, so slight we can't locate the voice that grasps the irony, aren't sure if the narrator knows whether or not these phrases "can be used without irony."

The Wheel invites characterization as "slight," but surely any satire inspired, as this is, by fondness, is bound to seem impossibly lightweight in an age when anything worth satirizing must also be worth denouncing. The unmatched serenity of Powell's humor is the product of a classical (to use his term) perspective: confident that the more obvious verities of life do not change much, he refuses to wring his hands at the decadence of the age, contenting himself with the sheer spectacle of human excess.

DAVID HEIM

David Heim is a freelance writer in New Haven.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World by David S. Landes (Harvard University Press). A lucid history of the mechanics and meanings of time. Reviewed (10/10/83)

Family Portrait with Fidel: A Memoir by Carlos Franqui (Random House). A former confidant of Castro sheds light on the origins and the failures of the Cuban Revolution. (2/20/84)

Wonderful Fool by Shusaku Endo (Harper & Row/Kodansha International). A broadly humorous novel about a Christian's alienation in Japan. (12/26/83)

Politics in the Ancient World by M. I. Finley (Cambridge University Press). This skillful study examines the nature of political participation in the polis. (12/12/83)

A Calculating People: The Spread of Numeracy in Early America by Patricia Cline Cohen (University of Chicago Press). A well-crafted study of the emergence of quantification in American culture. (2/13/84)

Khodasevich: His Life and Art by David Bethea (Princeton University Press). An authoritative book about an important Russian poet and critic too long neglected. (2/13/84)

Louis Armstrong: American Genius by James Lincoln Collier (Oxford University Press). A full and perceptive portrait, which includes learned discussions of his music. (1/30/84)

Midsummer by Derek Walcott (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). A masterful fifty-four-poem sequence, which establishes the poet's place at the center of current English poetry. (1/23/84)

Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age, Volume Three: Dean Swift by Irvin Ehrenpreis (Harvard University Press). An exhaustive, often elegant treatment of the writer's last years. (2/13/84)

Stones for Ibarra by Harriet Doerr (Viking). A strikingly crafted first novel that tells fateful tales of life and death in a remote Mexican village. (1/30/84)

TRB, *from page 6*

ing to tinker with success and failure as the economy dishes them out, is wrong for at least four reasons.

Most obvious but least interesting is the fact that many people at the top got there through blind luck, not through any special effort or talent of their own. They inherited wealth, or happened to own land that became valuable or oil when OPEC quadrupled its price. Through policies such as virtually eliminating the estate tax and slashing the tax on oil royalty income, our federal government has made this type of "success" much easier during the Reagan years. (Democrats in Congress, it's only fair to add, share the blame.)

Second, the American economy is not capitalism operating under laboratory conditions, where effort and "God-given talent" are directed by an invisible hand to where they can most benefit society as a whole. There's nothing "antisuccess" about wondering whether society is getting value-for-money from its highly paid investment bankers and lawyers; from corporate executives who run their companies into the ground, then award themselves big raises and "golden parachutes"; from speculators in various markets. Reagan, with his tax cuts, has made success in America more success-

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ful, but he's done nothing to make it more productive. If anything, opportunities for unproductive success have increased during his tenure.

Third, if individual talent is "God-given," as Reagan says, why is it so obvious that the individual is morally entitled to hoard all the fruits? Thomas Edison said that genius is "one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration," but surely that's a better definition of failure than of success. Effort helps, of course, but it's not the key. Most of the elements in financial success are "God-given" in the sense that they are the luck of the draw, and have little to do with innate moral worth. So even when riches come through individual talent, productively employed, why shouldn't they be spread around a little bit? One answer is practical: if you don't reward effort by talented people disproportionately, they won't put their talent to work. That's a reasonable justification for some disparities of wealth and income. But it's not a moral imperative, and it doesn't necessarily explain or justify the disparities we've got.

Finally, no one's prosperity in America really comes primarily from individual effort. It comes primarily from the efforts of other Americans, past and present. It comes from the economy and the society that all Americans have built together. Why does a third-generation American barber, say, make four times as much money as his grandfather made, and ten times what a barber makes in some Third World country today? Does he work four times harder? Is he ten times more talented? Of course not. The American entrepreneur who makes millions by building a better mousetrap probably learned science at public schools, tapped into generations of mousetrap R&D, produces and markets his mousetrap in the world's most efficient economy, and sells it to the world's most prosperous consumers. Everybody's "success," however great or modest, however augmented by luck or by grit, is largely a product of society. Is it "antisuccess" for society to claim a share?

What kind of conservative is Ronald Reagan? Denouncing "greed" and "envy," he sounds less concerned about the state of capitalism and individual liberty (both worthy concerns) and more like that other kind of conservative, who prizes wealth and poverty for their own sake, because they're "God-given."

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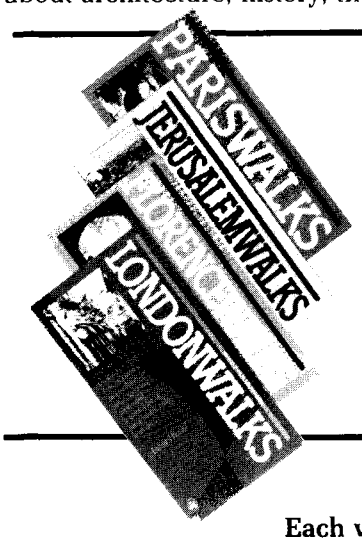

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JERUSALEM DIARIST

Digging Down, Building Up

"IF I TRAVEL ANYWHERE," said the Hassidic master Reb Nahman of Bratzlav, "I shall travel only to the Land of Israel." I have taken no such vows, but readers know that I travel often to the Land of Israel, drawn to a promise—mysterious but palpable—that lies hidden in the name of Zion. In the homes of orthodox Jews outside the Land, there is on one wall an unfinished patch as a reminder of their mourning for the Temple and for their separation from Jerusalem. My home does not carry that patch, but I scarcely need the reminder: though I am an American, by choice as well as by birth—and rather too jingoistic an American, I gather, for some of my friends and readers—I still feel myself incomplete because of my separation from Jerusalem. The idea of Jerusalem was always a triumph of imagination over fact. It was what made the years of the Diaspora bearable. And now that the coerced exile is over, how can Jerusalem, at least for those Jews who see meaning in their history, be other than the living metropolis of their spiritual consciousness? It is that for me—a deep sentiment, an ethical obligation. Zion, of course, is obligated to be more and better than it is. This yearning, this willingness to make amends for what it has not yet become, is the condition for its success. It is not, alas, the condition for the friendship of other peoples.

THANKS TO archaeological excavations and reconstructions, Jerusalem is in direct contact with all the strata of its past, from Davidic times up to modernity. A recent dig, beneath Damascus Gate, revealed the Roman beginnings of a grand street stretching south. The oriental bazaar that has grown up prevents further excavation in that sector of the city. But otherwise brutal history has been kind to the archaeologists. In sacking the Jewish Quarter in 1948, the Jordanians left the Jews who were to return nineteen years later a vast leveled expanse in which they could dig for their past and build for their future. To walk in this quarter between the pillars of antiquity and the infrastructure of tomorrow, between the digging down and the building up, is to experience the precariousness of the Israeli present. In digging, the Hebrew University archaeologists found the Cardo Maximus, the colonnaded Byzantine level of the continuation of that old Roman street. And they also found, just a few yards away, poignant testimony of Jewish continuity in the city: the remains of a charred defensive wall built by Hezekiah before the destruction of the First Temple; and of a burnt house, whose inhabitants were interrupted in the normal activities of living by the conquering Tenth Legion, the Fratensi, in the year 70. Among the still stunningly recognizable ruins—ovens, stoneware, utensils, a spear, a coin mold, a weight with the name in Hebrew of the prominent family whose house it was, the House of Kathros—was the skeleton of the lower arm and hand of a woman, determined to be in her early twenties. Nahman Avigad, the supervising archaeologist, writes in *Discovering Jerusalem* of the frightful associations conjured up by this spectacle: "We could visualize a young woman working in the kitchen when the Roman soldiers burst into the house and put it to the torch. She tried to flee, but collapsed near the doorway to perish in the flames. This arm seems to be the first and only human remains . . . associated with the great human tragedy which accompanied the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70." But the story doesn't end here. For two thousand years later, "when the descendants of the slaughtered returned . . . they uncovered the physical traces of the destruction, and rebuilt their homes over the ruins." Like the Kathros family, they could see from their windows the Temple Mount where their ancestors had worshipped. And they know that this is where they belong.

MY FRIEND Teddy Kollek, mayor of the city since before its reunification, has often taken me to those parts of the city not covered in the guidebooks—the sectors where the Arabs live. We went again on such an excursion one day last month. I know a few mayors in America; they travel well protected. But Teddy and I walk through the Arab quarters alone, greeted by strangers mostly as friends. One or two acknowledge him sullenly, the symbol of the Jewish return. A woman complains about a broken traffic light; a man thanks him for a new park. Kollek shows me a recently opened multimillion-dollar Arab health clinic. He shouts at some Arab teenagers throwing garbage, as I've seen him shout at Jewish teenagers doing the same. Embarrassed, they pick the garbage up, and the mayor explains, "Slowly everybody learns that garbage belongs in bins, but only very slowly." Jerusalem lives at the edge of tensions; any provocation might fire the tempers of its inhabitants. There have been incidents of individual terrorism, by Arabs mostly, now by Jews too. Yet, since 1967, there has been none of the kind of intercommunal violence that we have experienced amply in Boston and Miami. There have been no gangs of Jews falling upon Arabs, no gangs of Arabs falling upon Jews—and Lord knows there have been moments when this might have been expected. This is in fact a tribute to Teddy Kollek. In elections last fall, he was confirmed with unprecedented margins. More Arabs voted than ever before, and Jewish voters inflicted defeats on the zealot parties in the city council races. This is a hopeful sign that tolerance may rule in the city where humanity's most deeply felt collective emotions were born.

AMONG THE JEWS, there are three sorts of zealots. The secular ultranationalist zealots, many of them to the right of Begin's faction, pretend that there is no Arab writ whatever either to the land or in the city. The religious zealots are not nationalists at all; they believe that the Jewish writ in the Holy Land awaits the word of God and His active intervention. Before that happens, the Zionists are interlopers. These folk are vexed that various blasphemies occur among Jews in the holy city—autopsies, mixed-sex swimming, Sabbath auto traffic. They are not peaceful people, and one person they are not peaceful toward is Kollek. During the election campaign, in fact, some of them attacked and injured him. The most dangerous of the zealots, however, are the religious ultranationalists, small in number but having the inner force to commit reckless acts. These are men who dream of restoring the Temple or, failing that, simply bringing down the Mosques. They are terrorists the way no Jews in modern times have been, random terrorists by calculation and design. They threaten the dream—and the reality—far more than any Arab army.

M.P.

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